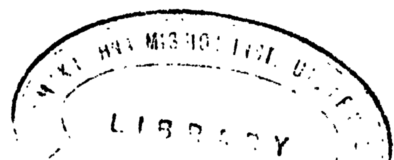




CASSELL'S HISTORY

OF THE

RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

Vol 3.

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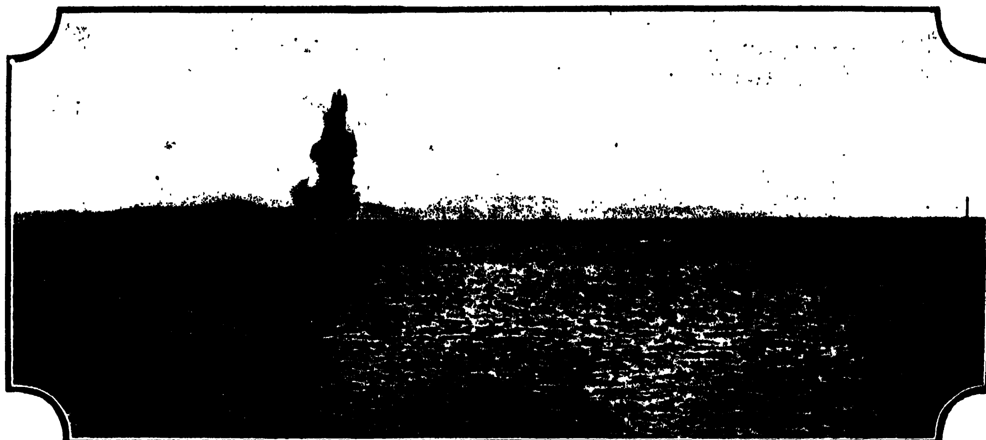
O THE

RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

Illustrated

VOLUME 3.

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JAPANESE CLEARING TALIEN BAY OF RUSSIAN MINES.
The mines were exploded by rifle shots from the steam launch seen in the picture.

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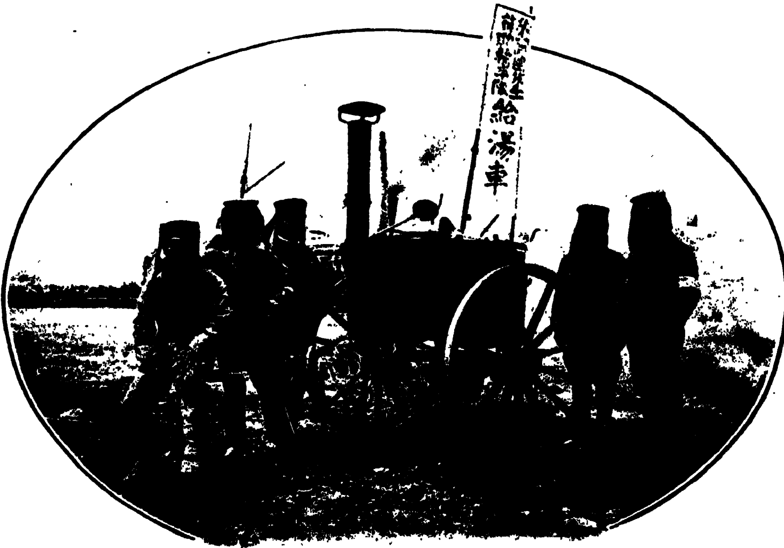


Photo: Nouvelle, Paris.

AN HOUR OF RELAXATION: GENERAL KUROPATKIN AT A CHINESE SHOW IN MUKDEN.

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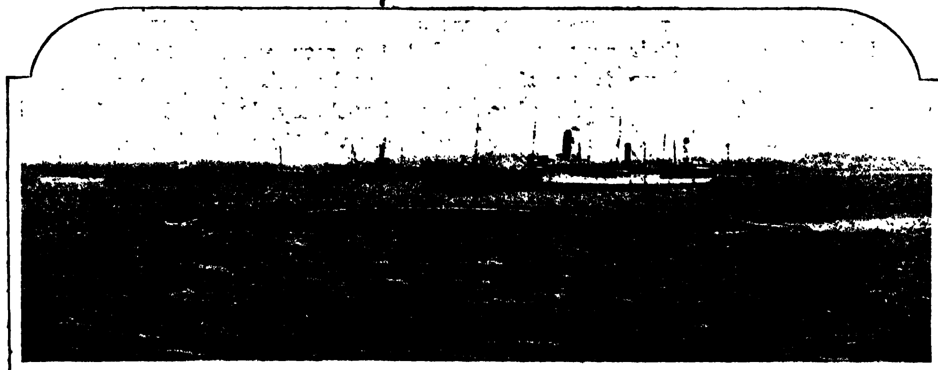
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PORTABLE TEA URN FOR MAKING TEA FOR THE JAPANESE SOLDIERS WHEN AT WORK ON THE WHARVES AT DALNY.



AFTER THE BATTLE OF MUKDEN: THE RETREAT OF THE RUSSIANS ALONG THE RIVER



THE DERELICT RUSSIAN CRUISER *VARIAG* IN CHEMULPO HARBOUR.
The "Variag" was sunk by Admiral Uriu at the outbreak of hostilities, and has since lain in a partly submerged condition on the harbour mud.

THE HISTORY

OF

THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

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CHAPTER LXXXV.

THE BALTIC FLEET IN MADAGASCAR WATERS—WORK AND DISCIPLINE—THE THIRD SQUADRON—HOME NAVAL DEVELOPMENTS—THE SECOND SQUADRON AT SINGAPORE—THE QUESTION OF NEUTRALITY—FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN—AN ANXIOUS SITUATION.

IT is just a year since the first act in the great military drama of the Far East opened at midnight on February 8th, 1904, in the roadstead outside the harbour of Port Arthur. In this short interval Port Arthur itself has passed into Japanese hands, and the powerful squadron, which on that eventful night learnt the first lesson of a long and terrible series, has ceased to be. In the Far East itself the naval might of Russia is represented only by a few patched-up cruisers and other smaller craft at Vladivostok. But a new fleet has been got together in the Baltic, and, after certain vicissitudes, has found its way into the Indian Ocean. Thus once more, at the commencement of a new act, the curtain rises on Russian ships at anchor, and it would be difficult indeed to exaggerate the extraordinary interest and many-sided significance of the spectacle thus afforded.

In Chapter LXXVII. we left the two original divisions of the Second Russian Pacific Squadron on the point of concentrating at Nossi Bé, on the north-west coast of Madagascar; while a third supplementary division was preparing to enter the Suez Canal. This was early in the new year, and later, in February, the

massed divisions, with their accompanying colliers, aggregated no fewer than seventy vessels. The sojourn of such a vast assemblage of ships, some of them battleships of the highest class, in these waters would have been an exciting circumstance even under peaceful conditions. But the fact that this great fleet was on its way to a theatre of war, where it was clearly destined to play a tremendous *rôle*, invested its performances during this period with peculiar fascination, to which subsequent eventualities were to add a tinge of gloomy pathos.

The history of the eight or ten weeks spent by the former Russian Baltic Fleet at Nossi Bé is not likely ever to be written in detail, and the published information on the subject is remarkably meagre. It is not, however, difficult to conjure up a mental picture of the threescore and ten ships at anchor in the calm sea at the north of the Mozambique Channel, their hulls set steadily in the oily-looking waters, and the whole surrounding atmosphere oppressively still and damply hot throughout two-thirds of the long day and night. Here and there, too, a few references in letters enable us to realise the interesting fact that, even in this exhausting environment, considerable activity was being displayed by the Russian commander in the direction of levelling up his ships and men to a higher state of fighting efficiency. One such reference, contributed by a correspondent who, in association with a contractor for supplies, visited the squadron at anchor and boarded a number of the principal ships, is singularly interesting.

"Admiral Rozhdestvensky," says this informant, "has worked wonders with his fleet. When he left Europe I am told that the ships were foul and dirty, that the men were untrained, undisciplined and rebellious, and that the moral was hopelessly bad. I could see no evidence whatever of this state of affairs. Although the ships still looked somewhat unprofessional, they were clean and trim, with the exception of their bottoms, which were more or less covered with barnacles. In spite of the great heat, the steaming humidity, and the ignorance of the Russian sailor, the Admiral has maintained a clean bill of health.

"It is true that many men, not being 'salted' to hot climates, suffered from the heat, but there were no cases of infectious diseases.

"The discipline of the fleet is excellent, but very severe, the men being heavily punished for the smallest delinquencies. A constant routine of drill takes place day in and day out—heavy gun firing, torpedo-net practice, submarines dashing about, small-arms drill, and scouting, all under the watchful eye of the Admiral, who seems to be the life and soul of the expedition.

"When the fleet came to Nossi Bé there was much drunkenness, but that has been practically stamped out. The men are worked too hard to indulge in excesses of any kind, for they are generally too tired to do anything but sleep after their day's exercises."

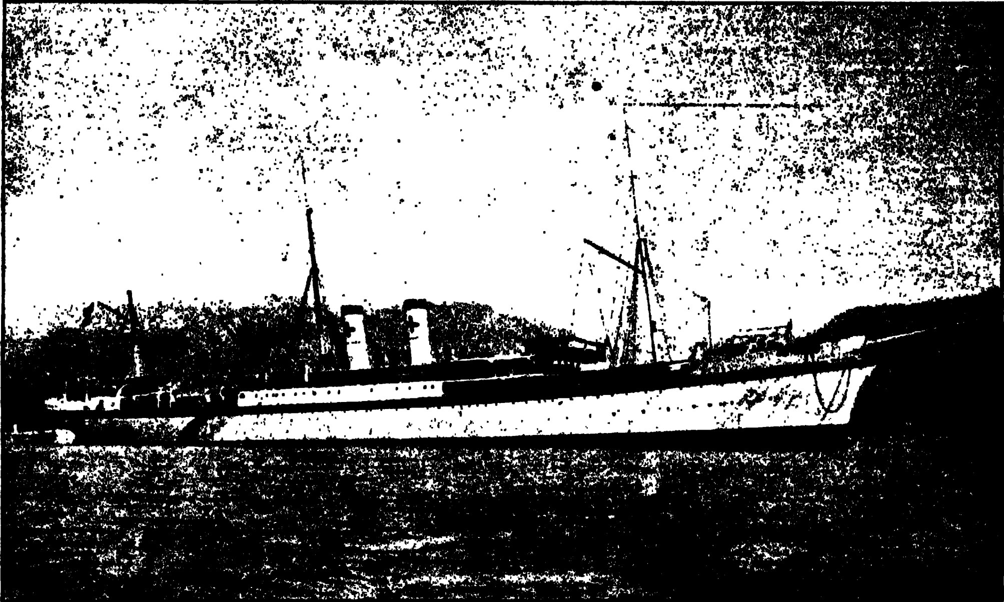
Later, the same correspondent adds: "It would be absurd to compare the fleet with the British or the German Navy, but at the same time, the men look reasonably workmanlike. Admiral Rozhdestvensky is gradually making sailors of them, and, like all Russians, they are brave and physically strong."

As to the manner in which Admiral Rozhdestvensky preserved discipline in his command several stories are told, of which the following, contributed by the

St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, is typical:—

"In the waters of Madagascar orders were issued that after sundown no officer or other person should be on any vessel but his own. One evening, however, a Sister of Mercy from the *Orel* stayed a considerable time longer, and when she at last wished to retire a steam launch was lowered, and three officers gallantly accompanied her back to the hospital ship. Rozhdestvensky, who got wind of this breach of regulations, at once signalled that the launch was to come alongside the flagship, when he saw the three officers and the Sister of Mercy. He then gave orders that the nurse was to be escorted to her ship, and that the officers were to go back next day to Russia in disgrace. And no entreaties availed to have that sentence commuted. There was a mutiny some time afterwards on board the *Orel* in the waters of Madagascar, which Rozhdestvensky put down promptly and ruthlessly. The two ringleaders were shot in a twinkling, and their principal followers received proportionately severe punishments."

In other ways besides constant drill and naval exercises generally, the Second Pacific Squadron was kept busily exercised during its stay in Madagascar waters. The requirements of such a fleet in the way of coal and food were enormous, and, although the attendant colliers and transports had brought with them vast stores—one French steamer alone is said to have carried 1,000 tons of frozen meat, while a collier is reported to have been wrecked with 12,000 tons of coal on board—the Admiral was keen to purchase as much supplementary fuel and food as possible, and many of the inhabitants of North Madagascar became rich through their traffic with a fleet so eager to buy, and apparently so reckless as to the price



THE RUSSIAN HOSPITAL SHIP *OREL*.

they paid. Mention was made in Chapter LXXVII. of the quantities of champagne shipped for the officers, who also laid in a huge stock of liqueurs, preserves, and other delicacies more suited to the needs of wealthy yachtsmen than of sailors about to meet a powerful enemy in a fight to a finish. It is a curious commentary on Rozhdestvensky's iron discipline that, while he was working his fleet to the utmost, he should not have sternly forbidden this senseless extravagance. It was not, as we have seen, from any tender regard for the susceptibilities of his officers as distinct from the men.

As to discipline and duty he kept the former under constant observation. "We work," says one officer writing home from Madagascar, "almost till we drop from exhaustion. If you could see our men now you would not recognise them. They have been regenerated, and have already fathomed all the mysteries of naval service—rapidity, accuracy, attentiveness, and, above all else, a conscious interest in the work. . . . The Admiral himself is present everywhere, is interested in everything, gives instructions, and works like all of us without rest or signs of fatigue. Stern and attentive to our wants, Admiral Rozhdestvensky entirely re-educated not only the rank and file, but the officers as well." Yet much of the effect of this hard work and training cannot but have been destroyed by the concessions made to that habit of self-indulgence which, from the outbreak of the war, had so sharply distinguished the naval and military officers of the Tsar from the commissioned ranks of the Japanese Army and Fleet.

It goes without saying that such a protracted halt as that made by Admiral Rozhdestvensky at Nossi Bé was not wholly due to his anxiety to level up the efficiency of his command and to make sure of crossing the Indian Ocean with full bunkers and ample stores of champagne and other "necessaries." There were at least two other circumstances to be taken into account, to both of which brief anticipatory allusion was made in Chapter LXXVII.

In the first place the arrival of the news of the fall of Port Arthur had not only modified to a serious extent the whole naval situation, but had produced, according to Reuter's correspondent at Port Louis, a feeling of profound demoralisation among the crews of the Second Pacific Squadron, which it was absolutely necessary to remove as far as possible before proceeding to the zone of possible combat. Secondly, although the Admiral may have all along known that it might be impossible to await in Madagascar waters the arrival of the Third Squadron, which was now being fitted out at Libau, there would be an added chance of a future junction if the Second Squadron could delay its departure eastward until the reinforcing ships were well on their way.

It must at least be put to Rozhdestvensky's credit that throughout he was under no illusions as to the magnitude of the task entrusted to him, and that from first to last he did his best to render the chances in his favour as numerous and substantial as possible. Herein he only followed Kuropatkin, but he had a singular advantage over that unfortunate leader. For it would seem that he was given, or assumed, a greater liberty of action than had been enjoyed hitherto by any naval commander since the institution of submarine telegraphy. He had already displayed singular independence

in regard to the North Sea outrage, and since his arrival in the Indian Ocean had still further emancipated himself from home control. Early in March the Russian Admiralty made the curious statement that it was unaware of Rozhdestvensky's immediate intentions, as he no longer reported his movements. It is probable then that the Admiral, on his own initiative, had deliberately extended his stay at Nossi Bé to as late a date as possible, partly with a view to letting the stunning effect of the fall of Port Arthur on his officers and men wear off, but more particularly in the hope of bringing the Third Squadron closer up in his wake.

The Third Squadron itself, consisting of the battleship *Imperator Nicolai I.*, the armoured ships *Admiral Oushakoff*, *Admiral Seniavine*, and *General Admiral Apraxsin*, and the cruiser *Vladimir Monomach*—details respecting which were given on page 430 of Vol. II.—left Libau on February 15th. The squadron was under the command of Admiral Niebogatoff, and from the first its efficiency was doubtful, not only because the ships were of second and third-rate quality, but by reason of the rank insubordination which was prevalent among the crews.

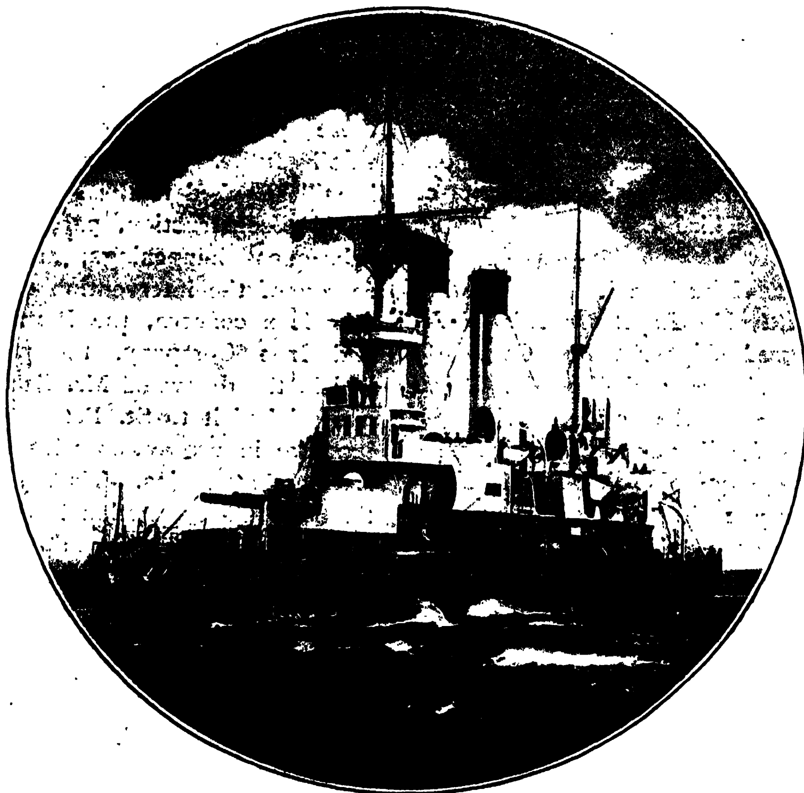
Four days after the squadron started a sailor was shot for stabbing a lieutenant, and other evidences of mutinous spirit showed what a risk was being run in order to provide Admiral Rozhdestvensky with, as it proved, an entirely worthless reinforcement. The voyage of the Third Squadron through the North Sea, the North Atlantic, and the Mediterranean was leisurely, and it was not until March 24th that it arrived at Port Said *en route*, according to the official statement, for the French port of Jibutil and Vladivostok. Meanwhile, as we shall see presently, the Second Squadron had left Madagascar waters and proceeded towards the Far East. But, before resuming the story of Admiral Rozhdestvensky's effort to restore Russia's naval position in the Far East, a few words may now conveniently be given to certain other Russian naval developments associated with this momentous experiment.

We may pass very lightly over the preparation of a Fourth Pacific Squadron, for the simple and direct reason that these preparations eventually proved wholly futile. But a sustained interest is still attached to the Russian plans of naval reconstruction, partly in view of subsequent happenings, and partly by reason of the intervention of that huge American concern, the Bethlehem Steel and Iron Company, the president of which, the renowned Mr. Schwab, made a special visit to St. Petersburg at this juncture in connection with tenders for Russian battleships. The actual negotiations in this connection have no special interest, but the circumstance that the resources of a country like the United States should be at the disposal of a belligerent nation, with the aims and methods of which the American people can hardly be said to have much sympathy, has a certain historical interest which must not be overlooked. Of course, it was essential to the performance of any such contract as that sought by Mr. Schwab that the war should be terminated before the delivery of a single warship. But the power of national wealth can hardly be better illustrated than by possibilities such as those here indicated.

Some few years ago it used to be said by competent naval critics that in any great naval war the probability was that the original fleets of two Powers of about

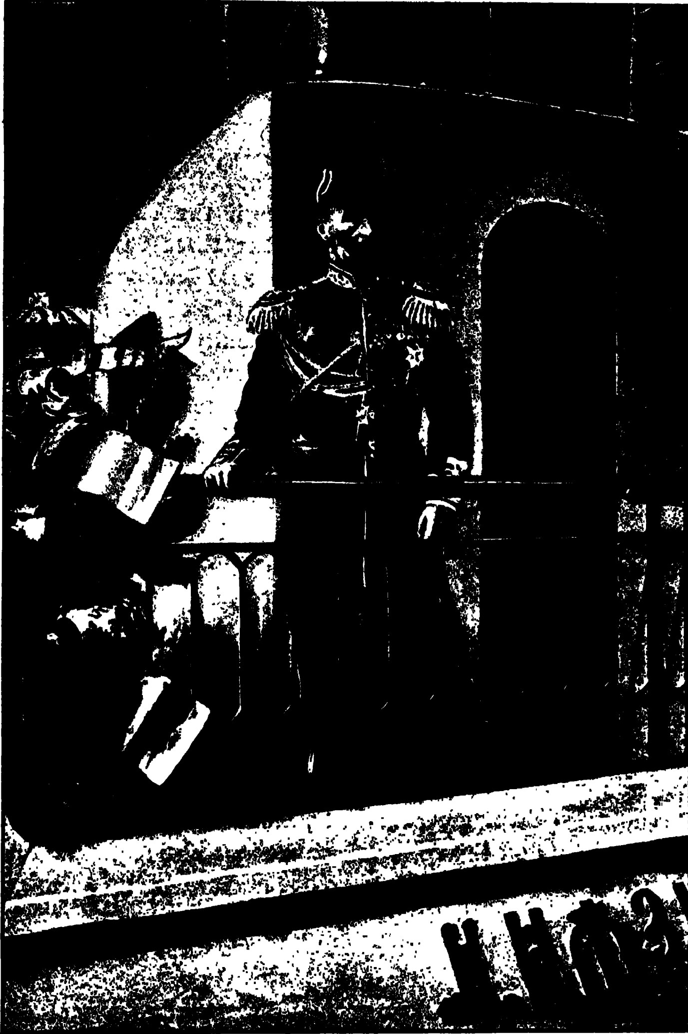
equal strength would be sent speedily to the bottom, and that ultimate victory would rest with the Power which could outstrip its adversary in the construction of a new fleet. This used to be regarded as a strong demonstration of the advantages possessed by Great Britain in her private ship-building yards, and no doubt the argument to some extent still holds good. But it must be modified, at any rate, by the contemplation of such cases as we have here illustrated.

If we only partially concede the claim of the Bethlehem yards that they can now turn out complete battleships, better, cheaper, and more quickly built than any constructed elsewhere, and, if we take into account the American reluctance to let sentiment stand in the way of business, we shall readily perceive that a nation which can somehow find the money, or whose credit remains even moderately good, can occupy at the end of a devastating war a position altogether different from that which it would have been compelled to occupy twenty years ago. For if the ships have been ordered in good time, and there is money enough in the exchequer to pay for them, or sufficient security can be given for the ultimate discharge of the bill, there is nothing to prevent a nation signing a peace in the autumn and starting afresh with a dozen brand-new first-class battleships in the following spring. Of course there are limitations, but



THE RUSSIAN ARMOURED SHIP *GENERAL ADMIRAL APRAXSIN.*

there is no question that this aspect of naval construction is one which hardly received the attention it deserved until the president of the Bethlehem Steel and Iron Company offered to build Russia a new navy "in a hurry."



ADMIRAL ROZHDESTVENSKY ON THE STERN WALK OF HIS FLAGSHIP.

Apart from an idea of naval construction on a huge scale, the Russian Admiralty was credited at this period with ceaseless efforts to purchase foreign steamers to serve both as transports and as auxiliary cruisers. Much activity was also displayed in the matter of submarines, and in the middle of March it was stated that the number of Russian submarines of a serviceable type built or building was twenty-five. Here, again, American enterprise was illustrated, the latest batch of eight boats, which had just been laid down in a secluded

portion of the inner harbour of Sevastopol, being of the most up-to-date American type, both construction and supervision being entrusted to American experts.

In Chapter LXXVII. extended mention was made of Captain Klado's efforts to impress his views of the naval situation upon the Russian Admiralty and the public. Notwithstanding some strong hints that he was going rather too far and too fast in this direction, Captain Klado, before leaving Paris at the close of the North Sea Inquiry, prepared for the press a work entitled "The Russian Navy in the Russo-Japanese War. After the Departure of the Second Squadron." French and English translations of this work were published, and it created a temporary sensation by its candid admission of defects, its warm advocacy of naval reconstruction and the liberation at all hazards of the Black Sea Fleet, and its ridiculous charges against Great Britain in regard to the Dogger Bank episode. But the wrath of the Russian Admiralty had now been fully aroused; Captain Klado was forthwith deprived of the greater part of his official emoluments, and was ordered to take up a rather nebulous appointment, the command of the river gunboats on the Amur. Here he once more came into collision with the authorities, and shortly afterwards disappeared from public view, a martyr to the illusion that Russian bureaucratic methods could as yet be combated successfully by mere honesty of purpose and plain speaking.

Returning to Admiral Rozhdestvensky's fleet in Madagascar waters, we find this at the beginning of March becoming a centre of other than purely warlike interest. It was obvious that, with the best intentions in the world, the French, into whose possession Madagascar had passed after the expedition of 1894-5, were allowing their neutrality to be played with somewhat recklessly by the commander of the Second Russian Pacific Squadron, and a situation was fast arising which would justify the strongest protests on the part of Japan. The above-quoted correspondent of the *Daily Express*, who visited the Russian fleet at Nossi Bé, pointed out that, although the ships were anchored outside the three-mile radius, picket boats were sent ashore daily for bullocks, chickens, and all sorts of supplies, and no difficulty was raised.

In France itself it was felt that the good name of the country was likely to be called in question if this state of things continued, and there can be little doubt that the French Government addressed some strong remonstrances to Russia on the subject. These were so far effectual that on March 16th Admiral Rozhdestvensky's fleet weighed anchor and left Nossi Bé for an unknown destination. Later it transpired that the fleet had shaped its course in the first place for the Chagos Islands, and on April 8th the squadron was sighted at Singapore. On the previous day the Third Squadron under Admiral Niebogatoff had left Jibutil, where it had learnt with profound discouragement the news of the battle of Mukden, of which a description will be found in subsequent chapters.

A critically interesting situation was now being reached. It had been freely anticipated by some that Admiral Rozhdestvensky would not be suffered to cross the Indian Ocean without encountering at least a portion of the Japanese Fleet. But it was hardly surprising that Admiral Togo should prefer

to wait for the newcomers within easy reach of his base, instead of adventuring his ships in the Indian Ocean, where not only the Russians might give them the slip, but where, moreover, repairs could not be effected in the event of an engagement. This did not, however, lessen the excitement created by Rozhdestvensky's nearer approach to the danger zone, an excitement which was now beginning to be coupled with genuine respect for the magnitude of the Russian Admiral's achievement. This latter sentiment was well voiced in the leading London journal by a correspondent who wrote: "We have suffered many things at the hands of the Russian Navy during this war; nevertheless, the news that Admiral Rozhdestvensky and the Baltic Fleet, scorning evasion and concealment, have stood on down the Straits of Malacca, have passed Singapore, and have sailed proudly into the China Seas will send a thrill of admiration through all Englishmen who read of it, and will enable us to forgive many things and admit that the Russian seamen appear ready to meet with courage all that the fortune of war may send them."

Of the appearance of the Second Pacific Squadron off Singapore an interesting account was given by Reuter's correspondent, telegraphing on April 8th. As the entry of the fleet into Far Eastern waters is an event of distinct historical importance, this description of the scene by an eye-witness is subjoined:—

"The Baltic Fleet was sighted off Singapore at half-past two this afternoon, and passed seven miles out. All the ships were burning soft coal, and the smoke they made was visible for miles. As a spectacle the procession of the warships, moving four abreast, was most splendid. The ships, magnificent but foul, were proceeding at about eight knots, and it took them fifty-five minutes to pass a given point. The van was formed by a large cruiser and three converted Hamburg-American liners. Then came the cruisers, colliers, and battleships, the colliers being mostly in the centre.

"I went out in my launch to see the fleet at close quarters. All the vessels showed signs of their long voyage in tropical seas, about a foot of seaweed being visible along the water line. One ancient cruiser had wooden stocked anchors. The decks of the warships were laden with coal, and the colliers and converted liners were light.

"The Russian Consul, M. Roudanovsky, visited the fleet and gave despatches to a torpedo-boat, but the ships did not stop. Subsequently he went alongside the Vice-Admiral's ship, but did not go on board, the conversation being carried on from the launch. He gave the Russians their first news of the disaster at Mukden. No gangways were lowered, no one was permitted to go on board, and no news was vouchsafed. The only launches allowed to approach were mine and that of the Consul.

"In town the native population, greatly excited, turned out and lined the sea front. The gunners and submarine miners were kept at their posts all day, manning the guns and mines. They were still at their posts when the fleet disappeared, about five in the afternoon, beneath the eastern horizon, still emitting volumes of black smoke. As the fleet did not enter territorial waters no salutes were fired."

The Russian Fleet had hardly cleared the Straits of Malacca when rumours of

encounters with the Japanese cruisers commenced, only to be followed by contradictions and fresh rumours. These reports obtained some credence owing to the common knowledge that Japanese scouts had a short time previously been sighted on several occasions in this neighbourhood, and it is certain that the Russians themselves fully expected to be attacked at this stage of their voyage. But, as a matter of fact, no action took place for several weeks to come, the interval of suspense being protracted to an extent which seemed impossible in these days when, both on sea and land, there are so many cogent reasons for bringing matters as quickly as possible to a clear issue. Although, however, not until the end of May did the Trafalgar of this extraordinary campaign take place, there was no lack of incident to render these weeks of waiting deeply interesting to the world at large. For Admiral Rozhdestvensky's arrival in the China Sea first brought into serious relief the responsibilities of several European Powers in regard to the maintenance of neutrality, and later placed one of these Powers in a position of such extreme delicacy that only with the greatest difficulty complications were avoided which might have wrapped the whole civilised world in the flames of war.

There is no doubt that, from the standpoint of nations desiring to carry out honourably the spirit as well as the letter of international law, no more dangerous firebrand than Rozhdestvensky ever held a responsible command. Morbidly impulsive to a degree already demonstrated with some clearness by the North Sea outrage, this extraordinary man was a mere fanatic where the possible side issues of his present enterprise were concerned. "I will enter Kiao-chau if I like, and who dare hinder me?" he is reported to have said to a French journalist who was questioning him as to his possible line of action. "I will go into any and every port I like—into Hong Kong, ay, into an Indian port if necessary!" It is said that he was quite undismayed at the prospect of trouble with Great Britain, which he anticipated, and actually foretold. But, of course, he did not condescend to explain how he proposed to silence the guns of Hong Kong or deal with Great Britain's naval forces on the East Indies, China, and Australian stations, which would soon have closed in on him had he taken any liberties with our territorial waters. Apart from such idle vapourings concerning ourselves, it was clear that Germany, Holland, the United States, and France were all justified in entertaining apprehensions respecting the future performances of such a queer-tempered individual, imbued as the latter was with the idea that his command of a powerful Russian fleet would enable him to place any interpretation he chose on the obligations of international law.

Of the interested countries mentioned, two, the United States and Holland, had already given Russia plainly to understand that if any attempt were made to use the Philippine Islands or the Dutch East Indies for purposes connected with the conduct of the war the attempt would be resisted by force of arms. In the case of the United States such a declaration was a peculiarly impressive one, and in that of Holland the Russian Government would have been almost equally foolish to provoke a conflict with a Power so tenacious, and one likely in such a case to receive a full measure of



THE BALTIC FLEET GOING THROUGH
THE STRAITS OF MALACCA.

outside support. As events showed, the "well-worn neutrality" of Germany was not to be seriously tried, but it is conceivable that here, too, a hint was given that Rozhdestvensky's bluster about entering Kiao-chau if he thought fit was not pleasing to German ears, and that, beyond the help already given in the way of coal and liners adapted for use as auxiliary cruisers, the Russian Pacific Squadron must not expect anything but sympathy from its German friends.

But France was in a different position altogether. In the first place she was Russia's ally, and as such anxious to do all that was honourably possible to further her interests. Secondly, the French possessions in Indo-China were both capable of furnishing practically unlimited supplies, at any rate of food, to the Russian Fleet, and were also conveniently adjacent to the probable area of naval operations. It will be remembered that after the naval action of August 10th, 1904, the Russian cruiser *Diana* took refuge at Saigon, the headquarters of the French Navy in French Indo-China, and was subsequently dismantled there. There were also a number of useful bays along the coast of Indo-China in which even a considerable squadron could obtain secure anchorages, and at the same time enjoy facilities for getting supplies from shore, provided the local authorities were not too fussily scrupulous.

There is every reason to believe that, warned by what had occurred at Nossi Bé, and sincerely anxious not to carry their partiality for "the friendly and allied nation" too far, the French Foreign Minister had requested the Russian Government to give Admiral Rozhdestvensky precise instructions as to the respect he ought to pay to French neutrality in the waters of Indo-China. It is equally credible that the Russian Government gave copious assurances as to the scrupulous care which would be exercised in deferring to French wishes. But with such an extremely arbitrary and irresponsible fleet commander as Admiral Rozhdestvensky these ordinary safeguards were not likely to prove effectual. It may even be surmised that the Admiral was well aware that, if he could secure any tangible advantage by setting at naught any formal instructions that might reach him from home, he would not be taken more sharply to account by his Sovereign and official chiefs than he had been for his performances in the North Sea. Be this as it may, it soon became evident that the Second Pacific Squadron intended to regard French neutrality as a dead letter, and to utilise the coasts of French Indo-China to the fullest possible extent both as a shelter from Japanese attack, and as a useful quarter in which to await the arrival of the Third Squadron and make ready for the coming supreme struggle.

It would be tedious, and serve no useful purpose, to describe in detail the course of events connected with the progress of the Third Squadron during the remainder of April and the greater part of May. It will be sufficient to say briefly that, before finally advancing to try conclusions with his great antagonist, Admiral Rozhdestvensky made a prolonged sojourn first in Kamranh Bay, on the Cochin China coast, and later in Honkohe Bay, which also lies within French jurisdiction. During this period a crisis arose of an extremely acute description, one, in fact, which was at one time much nearer fresh warlike eventuality than was generally imagined.

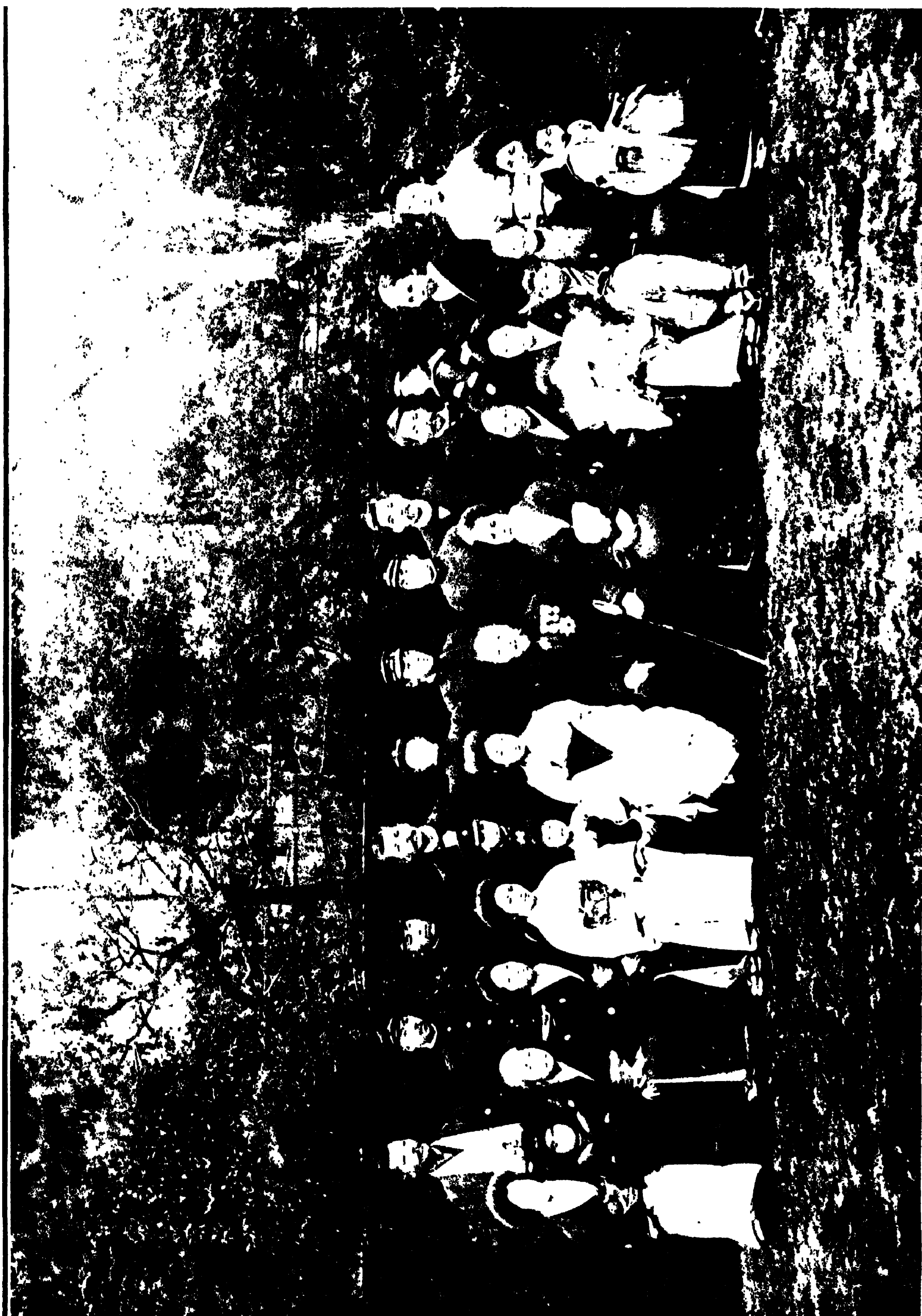
Even from the guarded statements of those "behind the scenes," it was clear that the most distressing consequences were only averted by a hint to France from a quarter from which such a suggestion at such a juncture had something of the character of a solemn and final warning.

There is, unfortunately, little doubt that the strongly expressed wish of the French Government that its neutrality should be carefully maintained in respect to the stay of the Second Squadron on the Cochin China coasts was disregarded not only by Admiral Rozhdestvensky, but by the local French officials. There is no sort of doubt that, whether the Second Squadron did or did not observe international law to the extent of remaining three miles from the shore, it profited largely by its proximity to the latter to obtain supplies, and it was even stated by eye-witnesses that local French officials openly looked on while the laws of neutrality were being thus set at defiance. In view of the eventual results it is not necessary to enter closely into detail; but the Japanese deemed their case sufficiently strong to address a very serious protest indeed to the French Government, and presently it began to dawn not only upon France but upon England as well that, unless something were done, and done quickly, the two latter countries would find themselves at war!

For it was now evident that the Japanese public was thoroughly aroused, and the Tokio Press was urging the Government in no uncertain language to take prompt steps which would have brought matters to a terribly clear issue. Japan felt that the evidence in her hands was sufficient to warrant a charge against France of having violated her neutrality and so committed an act of war. If that charge could have been sustained, and Japan had called upon England to act up to the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, England could not but have responded, and in a few hours irrevocable mischief would have been wrought. How near we were to this tremendous catastrophe will probably never be known outside a very small circle, but the crisis was undoubtedly of the gravest possible sort.

It was openly stated in the English papers of the period that this unhappy *imbroglio* was largely the result of Russian intrigue, and that another country besides Russia was secretly delighted to see the Anglo-French *entente cordiale* so rudely threatened. Certainly Russia had nothing much to fear from dragging France and England into the conflict, beyond the certainty of losing such naval strength as remained to her. From such an extended war, moreover, she might hope to escape with less humiliation than would attend her acceptance of peace at the hands of Japan alone. To the cloudy questions suggested by the other proposition one need not devote more than the passing remark that, if the country in question entertained such unworthy ideas, she richly deserved to have them rudely dispelled.

Putting aside such suppositions, the facts were sufficiently alarming. France did not seem to realise the condition of affairs until it was almost too late to rectify the position into which she had been dragged by the recklessness of her Far Eastern representatives. Happily our King Edward was at this time passing through France, and it is believed that he took the opportunity of impressing upon the French Foreign Minister, M. Delcassé, the real nature of the situation, and the absolute and



urgent necessity for immediate measures. The *Times*, too, performed a great international service by printing a leading article so frank in its expressions that it may almost be regarded as a historical document. In this the French were warned not to commit the mistake—one which Russia at the commencement of the war had committed with disastrous results—that because Japan was courteous and considerate she was not in earnest. It was also bluntly stated that if the charge brought against France of having afforded undue harbourage to the Russian Fleet could be substantiated, and Japan called upon us to fulfil our plain duty as her Ally, we should have no alternative but to go to her assistance.

The French public then awoke to a sense of the realities of the case. Looked at dispassionately the position was extraordinarily interesting, and, the crisis having become ancient history, let us hope of the non-repeating variety, it is worth while to recall the truly awful possibilities involved. The loss to France of her possessions in Indo-China would have been, of course, inevitable; and the combined navies of Great Britain and Japan would, equally of course, have proved a somewhat serious obstacle to the recapture of these valued settlements, in the acquisition of which our neighbours had expended so much blood and treasure. French colonies in other parts of the world would have been placed in extreme jeopardy, since a rigorous blockade of the French coasts, and an Anglo-Japanese command of the greater part of the ocean, would have rendered reinforcements out of the question. But there was another and, in some ways, a still more distasteful contingency. For purposes of offence or defence the Dual Alliance was no longer a very formidable sword or a very trustworthy buckler. War with England and Japan would mean for France either an unthinkable alliance with Germany, or the exposure of the frontier to the chance of fresh attack from an enemy from whom any high-minded scrupulousness as to not meddling in other folks' business when an easy and certain profit could be secured, was hardly to be expected.

Such was the price France found that she would have to pay, and was, indeed, on the brink of being compelled to pay, for the privilege of having strained the laws of neutrality in order to oblige the friendly and allied nation. Inasmuch, moreover, as war with France in such a case necessarily meant for England war with Russia, which on two previous occasions strenuous efforts had been made to avert, the position of this country, although in some respects highly advantageous, was not altogether happy. Superbly ready as was the British Fleet to meet any and every demand likely to be made upon it, the almost certain prospect of having to meet an invasion of India by the formidable legions maintained by Russia in Central Asia was not to be contemplated without some seriousness, while other contingencies afforded cause for added, if less patent, anxiety. But, over and above all these considerations of respective interests, neither England nor France was in the least disposed to throw the lately cemented *entente* into the sea and fly at one another's throats merely because one of them had committed a blunder rather of the heart than of the head.

From this truly historical complication there was, it is refreshing to be able

to read, a satisfactory release, but one which was not by any means easily nor swiftly arrived at. A chronicle of the various proceedings leading up to the adjustment of the difficulty would be wearisome, but some of the unpublished developments must have been strangely interesting. Up to about April 18th the French Press was disposed to treat the Japanese protests as open to argument, and in the *Temps* of that date an elaborate attempt was made to prove that France was quite justified in all that she had done, and a calm hope was expressed that the Japanese Government would show "the moderation which is to be desired in the discussion of this question"! But during the next few days a marked change of tone was observable not only on the part of the French Press, but on that of the Government. On April 21st a formal statement was made in the Chamber of Deputies to the effect that the Government meant to respect absolutely neutrality between the belligerents, and that precise and formal orders had been given on this subject to all French agents in the Far East. Two days later it became known that, in consequence of direct orders from the Tsar and pressing representations from the French authorities communicated through the Governor-General of Indo-China, Admiral Rozhdestvensky had left Kamranh Bay with the Baltic Fleet. "The news," added the Paris correspondent of the *Times*, "comes as an intense relief to all concerned in the maintenance of the peace of the world."

Unfortunately the incident was not yet by any means closed. While France and England were felicitating themselves on this happy outcome of the *entente cordiale*, and Japan was accepting with frank courtesy the assurance that France recognised and had undertaken to observe her neutral obligations, the ineffable Rozhdestvensky calmly returned to Kamranh Bay on April 24th, and remained until the 26th, when apparently he was "moved on" by fresh urgent representations on the part of the French authorities. Betaking himself to Honkohe Bay, he was ousted therefrom on May 9th, and then returned, not to leave finally until May 14th, by which time Admiral Niebogatoff's squadron had come up and effected a junction with the larger fleet. It is needless to say that these repeated evasions angered the Japanese very considerably, and it was pointed out very emphatically to France that, however honourable her intentions may have been, she had at least made it far more possible for the Russian Fleet to inflict a defeat upon Admiral Togo than it would have been had harbourage in Kamranh and Honkohe Bays been absolutely forbidden.

It may be that, if the result of the subsequent meeting of the Russian and Japanese Fleets had been different, there would have been regrettable consequences of the inability of France to impose her just demands upon Admiral Rozhdestvensky. But it is a somewhat curious circumstance that, after the first departure of the Russian Fleet from Kamranh Bay, the neutrality question, as far as it affected France, did not again assume anything like the grave aspect it wore during the two or three days anterior to April 23rd. It has been surmised that the explanation of this belongs to the category of "secret history." The suggestion—which is given for what it is worth—is that the French Government found it necessary to give both Russia and Japan to understand that she would not permit herself

to be embroiled in the conflict in the Far East merely because Admiral Rozhdestvensky would not behave himself. Accordingly, if Japan thought fit to attack the Russian ships, even in French territorial waters, France, having done her best to keep the latter inviolate, and not having sufficient naval strength at hand to enforce her wishes upon the Russian Admiral, would not regard such action as unfriendly to herself.

It will be admitted that this suggestion is at least an interesting one, especially when it is added that the line of action in question is said to have been adopted on the strength of English advice as absolutely the only means of saving the situation. But whether the problem was or was not solved in this way, the feared catastrophe was happily avoided, and the Baltic Fleet entered upon the last stage of its strangely chequered history without having drawn France and Great Britain, and perhaps half a dozen other nations, into the corpse-strewn, wreckage-studded maëlstrom of war.



ADMIRAL NIEBOGATOFF.

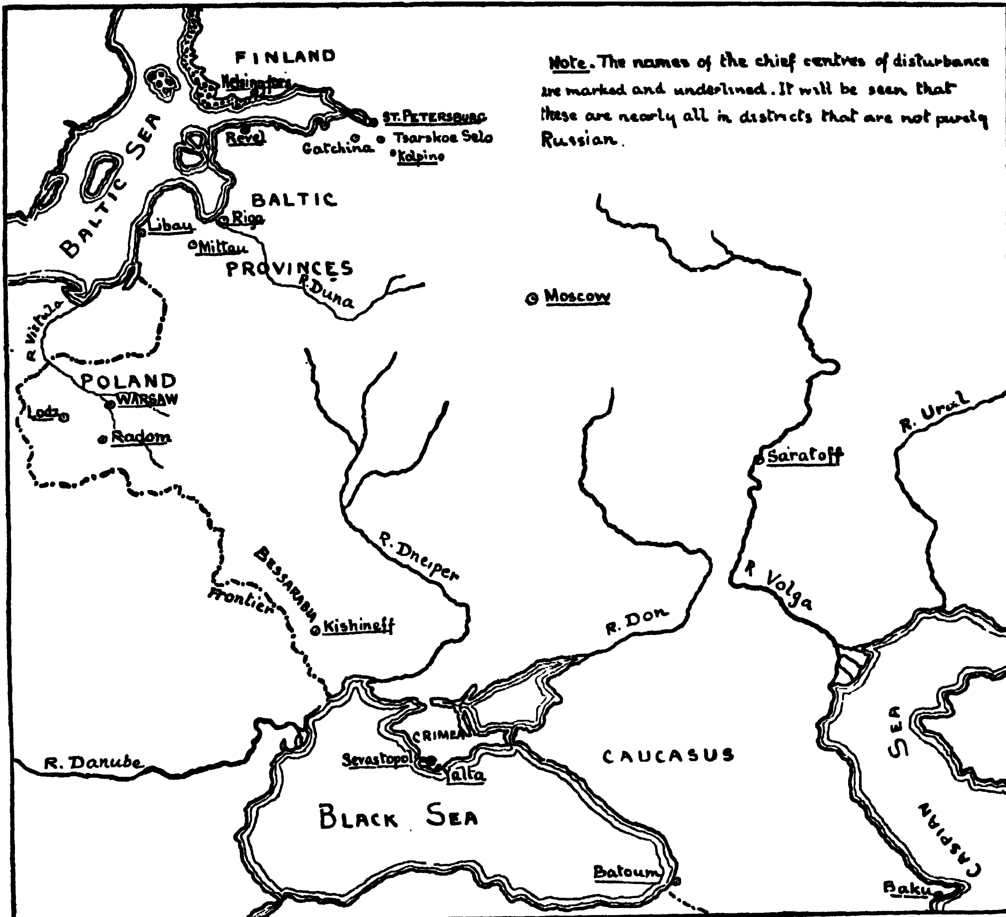
CHAPTER LXXXVI.

UNREST IN RUSSIA—RELATION OF DISTURBANCES TO THE WAR—DISORDER IN POLAND—RENEWED STRIKES IN ST. PETERSBURG—ASSASSINATION OF GRAND DUKE SERGE—THE TSAR AND REFORM—NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PROMISED—AGRARIAN AND RESERVIST RIOTS.

ONCE more the internal state of Russia claims our attention, and, indeed, the further our record of this great war progresses the deeper is the impression that posterity will find the gravest and most permanent results of the struggle in the Far East within the region of Russian domestic politics. There is nothing very new in this. Although most historians of the growth of nations are careful to place their "drum and trumpet" chronicles in the background, and to lay greater stress upon social tendencies and constitutional aspirations than upon the outcome of victories or reverses by land or sea, the student will recall several instances where both success and failure in war have produced modifications of great pith and moment in the life of a great people. Even in our own history the power of Parliament might never have become what it is had not the waging of war forced the Sovereign to concessions in order to obtain money for the payment of his soldiers and sailors, for the equipment of his ships, and the movement of his troops. But between such examples, familiar to every schoolboy, and the influence of the war in the Far East upon Russia there is a distinction to which a few words at this point may be usefully given.

Except where the Army is, as in France, an essentially popular institution, in the sense that it is controlled by, and owes no allegiance save to, a popular Government, the ordinary paths of civil and military life lie far apart. Although eventually a constitutional struggle may react upon the Army, just as a military campaign may produce social and political changes, the tendency, when either the Army or the civil population of a country is in a state of excitement, is for the less interested section of the community to go about its business rather more soberly and restrainedly than usual. Party politics and social questions are seldom so absorbing in time of war as in a peaceful interval, while most armies are quite unaffected by the biggest constitutional upheavals unless they are actually called upon to take sides in a civil war. But the influence of the conflict in the Far East upon the Russian people was from an early stage peculiar. It was not exactly and truly a sympathetic influence, although the constant calling out of reservists for the purposes of an utterly unpopular war led to much sporadic discontent and disturbance. Nor was it altogether the influence arising from opportunity. Apart from "Down with the War" agitations, and the anxiety of the terrorists to profit by the embarrassments of the Government, the simultaneous awakening of the Russian army and the Russian people, of the one to a

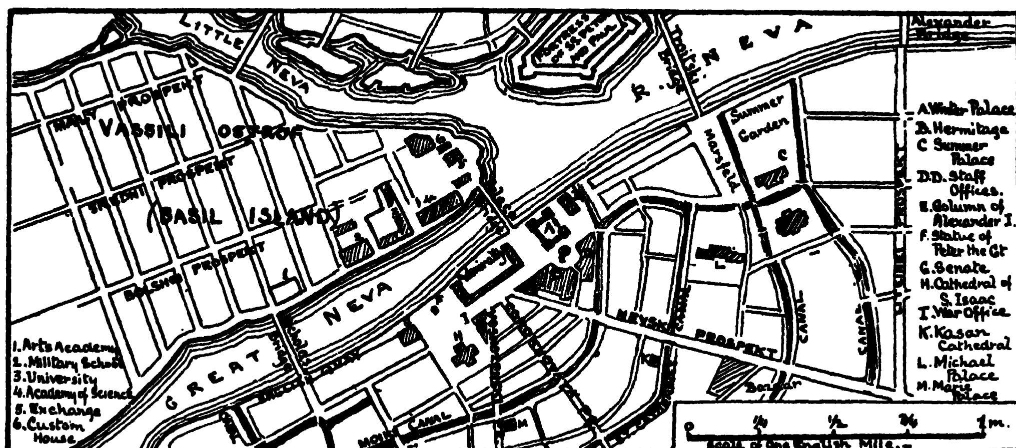
sense of its inferiority to a hitherto despised enemy, of the other to a sense of its rights and wrongs, can only be attributed to a sort of confluence of ideas and hopes and fears and disappointments Far East and to the internal disturbances with which it was accompanied, we may get a step further towards the relation of the one to the other. For both were symptomatic of the same prior disorder,



THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA. SKETCH MAP SHOWING CHIEF CENTRES OF REVOLT DURING THE EARLY PART OF 1905.

of which history affords no previous example.

There is a well-known term in medicine, "symptomatic," which indicates that a trouble proceeds from some prior disorder, and, if we apply this term both to the Russian conduct of the war in the derangement, namely, of important organs through undue stimulation of some and disuse of others. Russia would undoubtedly have done far better in her trial of strength with Japan had she first gone through a process of purging her system of corruption and



SKETCH MAP OF CENTRAL ST. PETERSBURG, SHOWING THE PRINCIPAL SCENES OF DISTURBANCES.

other foul disorders fatal to the successful conduct of war on an immense scale with a strong and crafty adversary. Again, had the operations in Manchuria rested on a basis of sound domestic policy, there might still have been defeats and there might still have been strikes, but there would have been no semblance of a revolution.

But Russia was doomed to double disaster. She went forth to fight when she ought to have gone to a doctor, and not only suffered some smashing blows at the hands of her young and vigorous opponent, but actually had to undergo an operation in an interval of the fighting! For many countries this would have meant, if not annihilation, at least a long postponement of recovery. But Russia is so strangely constituted that it may positively profit her to have had the drubbings and the hospital treatment almost simultaneously, because, missing one, she might have missed both, and her eventual rottenness would have been more serious than the bruises inflicted by the club of war or the suffering caused by the revolutionary knife.

It is important that these reflections should preface even a discursive glance at the salient features of the outbreak in Russia which accompanied the later happenings in Manchuria. For, henceforth, the war became more and more mixed up with domestic politics, and it is impossible to give any fair as well as coherent idea of it without keeping steadily in view the extraordinary movements among the Russian people of all classes, and in all parts of the empire, which were clashing with the operations at the front, and were only by tremendous efforts prevented from bringing them to a sudden standstill. In this connection some sort of credit must be given to the Russian Government, since its difficulties were unprecedented, and only sublime self-confidence, coupled with a striking exhibition of brute strength, could have enabled it to bear the double burden not for weeks only, but for months. From other, perhaps more correct, standpoints, the spectacle was a pitiable one, but, pitiable or admirable, it was full of grim instructiveness, and never again, perhaps, will such a sight be witnessed as that of an empire with huge armies in the field and a powerful fleet on its way to the

theatre of war, with its capital simultaneously terrorised, the streets of its provincial towns running with blood, and even its peasantry in organised revolt against bureaucratic tyranny.

Resuming our story of the disturbances in Russia at the point at which we broke off in Chapter LXXX., it now becomes necessary first to add some details to the brief allusion previously made to the troubles in Warsaw and other parts of Poland. Here, for example, is an extract from a letter written by the special correspondent of the Paris *Journal* with reference to the outbreak on January 27th and 28th, of which one incident of British interest was mentioned on page 490 of Vol. II. During the first two days of the strike the measures of the police were so lax that the rioters had almost a free hand. On January 29th the authorities decided to act. M. Lebaut, the correspondent quoted, says :—

"They proceeded to exercise a terrible and blind repression. While the Grodno hussars charged through the principal streets, sabring right and left, infantry patrols commanded by non-commissioned officers were shooting at random people who had nothing to do with the strike. . . . When night fell upon those scenes of horror . . . the pillage began again, but this time the soldiers had their share of it. What had been left in the shops by the rioters found its way into their pockets. When the shops were empty they searched the people in the streets under the pretext of looking for arms. If a person thus searched had nothing in his pockets, he was accompanied home in order to ascertain whether he had any subversive publications in his possession, when the soldiers laid hands upon whatever valuables they found. Numerous complaints were made, and it is only fair to say that the military authorities tried to discover and punish those guilty."

The feeling of the Poles towards the bureaucracy responsible for such outrages as these was intensified by the reflection that, despite the comparative smallness of the Polish population, the Poles still constituted twenty-five per cent. of Kuropatkin's army in Manchuria. The attitude of those liable to military service but not dispatched to the front can readily be imagined. M. Lebaut mentions that in the street he saw seven or eight young men pass by under custody of a dozen soldiers with drawn swords. He imagined them to be strikers, but on inquiry found that they were Polish recruits who were being sent to the East to serve the "Russian fatherland."

Of the spread of the disturbances to other parts of Poland there is plenty of lurid evidence available. The following excerpts from a private letter written by a resident of Skarzysko, and dated February 8th, afford a painfully vivid picture of the prevailing state of anarchy, and of the behaviour of those in civil and military authority :—

"We have had exciting times here the last week. The factory workers struck work here on Friday in sympathy with their fellows all over the country. The masters made no objections, and told them they might bring their grievances to them and they would be considered. The prefect of the province came on the same night with a company of soldiers and an officer. The 'superiors' spent the night drinking. The next morning the strikers formed a procession to go round and interview the masters at the different factories. They had not

received any orders against doing so. They first went to M. Witwicki, the principal factory owner here. He talked with them, and agreed to send a statement of their wants to headquarters (Government, I believe).

"Then they started to go to another factory. They were perfectly peaceful and harmless and totally unarmed, about 800 in all. Walking quietly towards the next factory they had to pass the railway, where the soldiers under their drunken officer were stationed. They were called on to halt, which they did, and the leaders went forward to meet the officer, who came towards them with a loaded revolver, which he fired at them, but was too drunk to hit them. He then gave orders to the soldiers to fire, and five volleys were discharged into the crowd, who were now running away, frightened by the revolver shots. Twenty-five were killed and forty-four wounded.

"After that the soldiers were ordered to search the bodies, which they did to some purpose. Not a single arm was found; but the wages which many of them were known to have received a few hours previously had disappeared when the bodies were given up to the families, as well as all their private belongings. The officer and the prefect, who was the person responsible, retired to dinner when this work was ended, and the prefect, in reply to someone, said: 'Oh! Polish cattle! I can kill as many as I please.'

"This place is now proclaimed to be in a state of siege, and we still have the drunken prefect and officer as guests in the village, as well as the soldiers, who



A TERRIBLE HARVEST: TROOPS COLLECTING THE DEAD AFTER THE STREET FIGHTING IN WARSAW.

are probably drunk, too, being well provided with their victims' money.

"One of the amenities of a 'state of siege' is that your house may be entered at any hour of the day or night and searched from top to bottom, presumably for arms or forbidden literature, but really to carry off all they can get."

Another frightful collision between the military and populace took place in the second week of February at Sosnowice. The strikers at a colliery were engaged in intimidating a number of men who had expressed their willingness to resume work, and were about to do so when they were surprised by the mob and threatened with revolvers. The troops were hastily summoned, and fired three volleys



SLEIGHS FOR THE BARRICADES: THE ST. PETERSBURG SLEDGE-DRIVERS' FUTILE ATTEMPT TO IMITATE PARISIAN REVOLUTIONARY METHODS.

into the mob, which was crowded together in the colliery buildings and refused to disperse. Over a hundred people were reported to have been killed or wounded in this ghastly encounter. In fairness to the authorities, it must be added that here, as in some other parts, the strikers were responsible for the intervention of the military, as they not only refused to disperse, but are said to have fired at the troops with revolvers and threatened to blow up the mines and various buildings with dynamite. But the readiness of the military to resort to extreme measures on the slightest provocation, and the story of their disgraceful performances at Warsaw, undoubtedly rendered the strikers much less amenable than they would have been had the process of repression been less brutal and the blood of their comrades less freely spilt. It is significant that, in spite of the revolver shots said to have been fired by the strikers, not a single soldier received any wound or other injury in this one-sided conflict. It may be added that the carnage at Sosnowice was exceeded, doubtless with much the same immunity on the part of the butchers, at Lodz, where, as the result of a few days' disturbances, 144 bodies were buried in the cemeteries and 200 wounded were taken to the hospitals.

We may now return to St. Petersburg, where, during the first fortnight of February, there was a marked recrudescence of the strike movement, but no very serious general disturbances. As a correspondent observed, the strikers had felt their feet, but were quite unable to struggle with capitalism supported by bureaucracy, military, police, and an army of spies. In such an unequal contest it is natural that the issues should have been somewhat confused, and that the cause of labour should have become temporarily separated from that of political freedom. Something of this cleavage is indicated by the reply of a skilled mechanic in St. Petersburg to a foreign investigator of the situation. A sad note of hopelessness is struck in this pathetic statement :—

"We are unable to continue the strike. We are practically starving now. We want piece-work or an eight-hours day, and, above all, the elimination of spies among the men. Constitution! We don't know what that is. The majority of us are unable to read. Ours is not a political movement. We want to live —that's all. The average wage at the works is eighteenpence per day, and two shillings and tenpence for skilled labour."

But speculation as to the true inwardness of the disturbances in the capital and throughout Russia was suddenly hushed by tidings which echoed like a thunder-clap from one end of Europe to the other. On February 18th it became known that on the previous day the Grand Duke Serge, uncle of the Tsar, and one of the most prominent members of the Imperial Family, had been assassinated in broad daylight at Moscow, where he had formerly served for several years as Governor-General, and was still commander of the troops of the Military District.

The sudden and tragic removal of any of the Grand Dukes would have created a marked sensation, but the selection of the Grand Duke Serge suggested a deliberate attempt on the part of a Terrorist conspiracy determined to lop off the very tallest branches of the reactionary tree. The Grand Duke, who was the fourth son of the Emperor Alexander II., was believed to have strongly urged the

Tsar, in the course of recent events, to remain true to the Emperor Alexander III.'s policy of maintaining autocracy intact, and it was understood that, in particular, he had opposed any idea of allowing a meeting of Zemstvo delegates. When the Tsar seemed disposed to make concessions, the Grand Duke Serge resigned his post as Governor-General of Moscow, retaining only his military command. In Moscow he was particularly well hated for his harsh and haughty spirit, but his wife, the Grand Duchess Elizabeth, who was a sister of the Tsarina, and a niece of our King Edward, was greatly beloved and respected. The Grand Duke was known to treat his beautiful wife with much brutality, and this circumstance naturally added to the detestation in which he was generally held. Of the Russian Jews he was a fanatical and relentless persecutor. Serge Alexandrovitch was, in fact, as a diplomat remarked, "absolutely mediæval. It would, indeed," the same authority added in an account of him written when the news of his tragic removal arrived, "not be unjust to describe him as a morose, ill-tempered, sinister ruffian, and there is no question that the great majority of his nephew's subjects will regard his death not so much as an assassination as the execution of a relentless enemy of the common weal. . . .



GRAND DUKE SERGE.

In appearance, Serge was a bearded, long-faced man with a jaw of iron, hard-set teeth, cruel eyes, without a smile. He was the personification of Absolutism."

The assassination of the Grand Duke Serge was carried out in a singularly sure-handed manner, recalling in some details the murder of M. de Plehve, the late Minister of the Interior. Since resigning the Governor-Generalship of Moscow, the Grand Duke had taken up his quarters in the Palace of the Kremlin, and at three o'clock in the afternoon of February 17th his Imperial Highness was driving through the Senate Square on his way to his town residence in the Twerskoi Boulevard, where he was to join the Grand Duchess, who was at the time engaged at the Kremlin in superintending work for the wounded in the war. At a short distance behind the Grand Duke's carriage followed two detectives in a sledge. The Senate Square was empty save for these vehicles, a sentry posted in front of the Arsenal, an old woman, and a man dressed like a respectable workman, who was coming in an opposite direction to that taken by the carriage.

The carriage was passing between the Arsenal and the Law Courts when the man dressed like a workman suddenly moved towards the vehicle and threw a bomb directly underneath it. The explosion was so great that all the windows in the Law Courts were smashed, and the report was heard outside the city. The carriage was blown to pieces, nothing but the four wheels remaining. The horses were unhurt and bolted.

The Grand Duke Serge was literally blown to pieces, the head being entirely destroyed, and one leg and arm being severed from the trunk. The driver was so seriously burned and otherwise injured that he died on the way to the hospital. A large and excited crowd immediately collected, and a few minutes later a most painful scene took place, the Grand Duchess having heard the explosion and rushed out from the Kremlin, hatless, to the spot where the outrage had taken place.

Meanwhile, the murderer was arrested as he was walking away with his face and arm bleeding from the effects of the explosion. When the police seized him he endeavoured to take a revolver from his pocket, but was overpowered, and was taken to the police station shouting, "Long live liberty! Death to the tyrants." He was found to be a young man of about twenty-eight years of age named Ivan Koloaeff. Two months later he was tried and sentenced to death. On being arraigned he refused to plead, declaring that he was not a criminal before his judges, but a prisoner taken in civil war.

The outrage hardly came as a surprise to the residents of Moscow. Indeed, it was suggested that the action must have been expected by a large number of people, for crowds of workmen were the first to reach the Senate Square after the explosion, although it is far removed from the industrial quarters. It was stated that several warnings had been received, and the police had taken many extra precautions. The Grand Duchess herself had recently received two anonymous letters declaring that the life of the Grand Duke was doomed, and imploring her not to drive in the same carriage with her husband, as everybody liked her and wished her no harm.

On the Continent, although a sensation was created, it can hardly be said that great surprise or regret was expressed



THE ASSASSINATION OF THE GRAND DUKE SERGE: THE SCENE AT THE NIKOLSKY GATES OF THE KREMLIN AFTER THE BODY HAD BEEN REMOVED.

The people [illegible] for [illegible] of the [illegible] Grand Duke.

when the news of the assassination was circulated. There was some astonishment at the completeness and precision of the outrage, but the chief feeling seemed to be one of apprehension lest it should incline the Tsar to further reactionary measures, and render futile all hope of reform. In England the event was discussed with much calmness, and the interest aroused by the details of the tragedy, and by subsequent elaborate accounts of the lying-in-state ceremonial, can only be described as quite moderate and evanescent compared with the genuine thrill of horror and alarm created by the news of "Red Sunday." Perhaps the most instructive comment on the tragic incident came from Japan, the Press of which expressed regret for the cruel manner of the Grand Duke's death, but did not fail to attribute the outrage to the high-handed manner in which the Russian Government had suppressed the recent demonstrations and riots. The war, the *Jiji Shimpo* went on to say, which had been attended with such oppressive action on the part of the Russian Government, was a war with which the Russian people had little sympathy. In one sense, then, Japan was helping to free Russia from oppression. In any case, she was fighting not the people, but the Government of Russia, and, when the war was finished, a better understanding and increased sympathy between the Russian and Japanese peoples might prove a happy sequel even to such a deplorable crime as the one in question. The combined enlightenment and good taste of this commentary are in striking contrast to the observations of some of the Russian journals on this episode.

As for the reception of the news by the Russians themselves, it would have been interesting if some idea could have been given of the effect of the intelligence at the front, but on this point there is little or no available information. Yet the assassination of such a notable military official, to say nothing of other considerations, could not but have been gravely discussed among all ranks of the field army, while further deep feeling must have been aroused by the frequent and open surmises that the Tsar himself would be the next victim. At St. Petersburg, of course, there was much excitement, and at Tsarskoe Selo martial law was declared, and special precautions were taken to guard the Imperial Family from apprehended outrage. The Tsar himself exhibited great fortitude, and preserved his composure very remarkably when the assassination was reported to him, but he made no effort to conceal his sense of the gravity of the occurrence.

A well-informed correspondent writing from St. Petersburg a few days later described the condition of affairs at Tsarskoe Selo as resembling that which prevailed at R. L. Stevenson's famous Suicide Club. The chief topic of conversation at the Palace was the chance of this or that member of the Imperial Family remaining alive. The numerous threatening letters received at the Palace by every post were discussed with morbid interest by the Tsar and others of his immediate *entourage*. This painful realisation of impending possible danger was heightened by the unwillingness of the police officials to allow the Tsar even to take a walk in the palace grounds without rendering the "enterprise" as secure as possible by extensive preparations.

It is, however, to the credit of the Tsar that, in spite of an environment which

might well have warped his judgment in addition to shattering his nerves, the assassination of his uncle did not produce the anticipated effect of calling forth fresh measures of ferocious repression, and of altogether strangling the hopes of reform. It is an interesting fact that, only two days before the Grand Duke Serge was murdered, the Tsar had decided in principle upon convoking some sort of popular assembly, the first suggestion being that the Zemski Sobor, or ancient Muscovite Territorial Council, should be summoned for the purpose of enabling the Sovereign to ascertain the opinion of the country on reform and other questions. Although it soon became evident that there was little immediate chance of the revival of the Zemski Sobor itself, the Reform party in Russia learnt with relief that the Tsar was still apparently willing to make important concessions in the direction indicated.

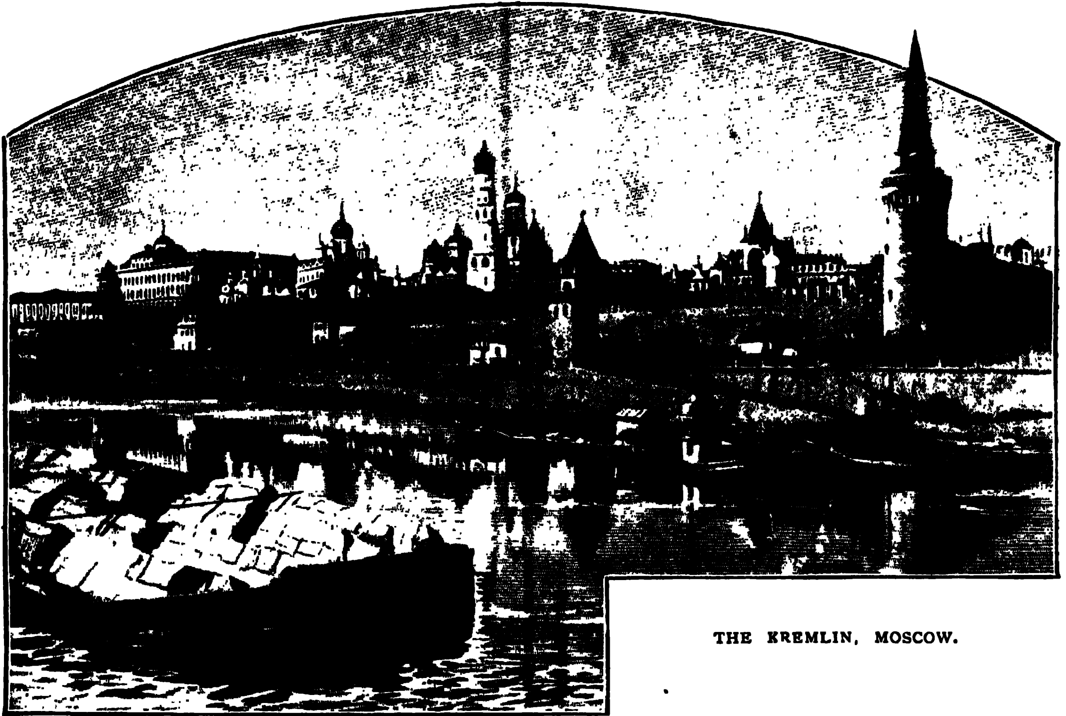
Imperial action of some sort was, indeed, becoming almost imperative. Only three days after the assassination of the Grand Duke Serge a strange emphasis was laid on the labour disturbances in the capital by a meeting of the students held at the University, at which the proceedings were of an extraordinarily stormy character. Violent speeches were delivered demanding a Constitution, the massacre of "Red Sunday" was denounced, and resolutions were carried condemning the attitude of the Government, welcoming the workmen as allies in the cause of freedom, proposing the establishment of a national militia as a guarantee against Government excesses, and favouring the continuance of the strikes. Banners were displayed bearing the inscription, "Death to the Executioners," and finally a life-size portrait of the Tsar was cut out of its frame and torn to pieces.

To add to the difficulties of the situation, disorders broke out in the Caucasus, the mixed population of Tartars, Armenians, and Circassians banding themselves together against the Government, and setting the troops successfully at defiance. Batum was in a state of anarchy, telegraphic and railway communication was suspended, and trade temporarily paralysed.

On March 3rd the position of affairs was temporarily modified by the publication of an Imperial Rescript promising the convocation of a popular assembly. "My desire," wrote the Tsar, in addressing this Rescript to the Minister of the Interior, "is to attain the fulfilment of my intentions for the welfare of my people by means of the co-operation of the Government with the experienced forces of the community and, continuing the work of my crowned ancestors, to retain undiminished the Russian land and to maintain order.

"I am resolved henceforth, with the help of God, to convene the worthiest men possessing the confidence of the people and elected by them to participate in the elaboration and consideration of legislative measures."

This, by itself, would have been regarded by the people generally as a promising indication of reform, but much of its effect had unfortunately been destroyed by the issue only a few hours previously of the *Official Messenger*, containing an Imperial Manifesto in which the immutability of the present system of government was affirmed, and the Tsar's faithful and obedient subjects were called upon to rally round the Throne! It subsequently transpired that the reactionary counsellors of the Tsar had



THE KREMLIN, MOSCOW.

prevailed on him to issue the Manifesto without reference to the Ministers with whom he was discussing the subject of the proposed reforms. The Ministers, on arrival at Tsarskoe Selo, expressed their astonishment at the publication of the Manifesto, and, in view of the excitement it had already caused, urged upon the Tsar the imperative necessity of finishing the Reform Rescript—which was actually in course of preparation—and issuing copies of it forthwith. The Tsar was at first anxious to try the effect of the Manifesto, but the gravity of the crisis was so plainly put to him by his Ministers that at last he reluctantly consented to sign the Rescript. Thus on one day the Russian people were asked to regard the Throne as still the only source of government, and were promised a truly representative assembly. Nothing more typical alike of the existing state of confusion and of the Tsar's incapacity to deal either strongly or straightforwardly with the situation could be imagined.

The simultaneous publication of the Manifesto and the Rescript had other unfortunate consequences in addition to promoting uncertainty as to the genuineness of the Tsar's intentions. In the provinces the Rescript did not obtain anything like the same publicity as the Manifesto, and the result was remarkable. Among the Russian peasantry autocracy is popular; it is the landlords, officials, and manufacturers who are detested. "The *mujik*," says a correspondent of the *Times*, "is firmly convinced that the 'Little Father' and he are both victims of the *tchinovniks*, who have brought an unpopular and unsuccessful war, strikes, cholera, and countless ills upon the country in order

to share the plunder with the landlords and manufacturers. The *mujik* is strengthened in his fanatical conviction by the Holy Synod's recent denunciation of alien agitators. To the peasant, foreigners are all alike, and, as the manufacturers are mostly foreigners, his hatred of the capitalist becomes patriotic." Accordingly, when the peasantry heard the Imperial manifesto read in the churches they became imbued with the conviction that the rally round the Throne which the Tsar desired was for the purposes of a campaign against internal enemies in the shape of the officials, landlords, and manufacturers whom the *mujiks* themselves so fiercely hated and distrusted. The result was an agrarian outbreak of tremendous proportions, in the course of which numbers of landlords and others were slaughtered, houses and factories were burned, and great estates were pillaged by immense mobs over which neither police nor military had any control.

Towards the end of March reservist riots began to burst out afresh in various parts of Russia, a notable case occurring at Minsk, where a number of reservists proceeded to pillage the Nijni Bazaar, smashing everything they could lay their hands on, and beating the passers-by. For three days the town was at the mercy of drunken soldiers, whose performances gave little hope that, even if they ever found their way to the front, they would prove of the slightest use as fighting-men.

Truly the lessons which in the first quarter of 1905 Russia was being taught at home were scarcely less humiliating and costly than those which she was learning in Manchuria at the hands of the Japanese.



RUSSIAN FARM LABOURERS AT DINNER.
By permission, from J. Foster Fraser's "The Real Siberia."

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

THE NORTH SEA INQUIRY—CONCLUSIONS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS—A "LITTLE INTRIGUE"—THE COMMISSION'S REPORT—AWARD CONSIDERED—BRITISH FEELING—IMPORTANT RESULTS.

BEFORE returning to the battle-ground of Manchuria it is necessary to redeem a promise made at the end of Chapter LXXXII. (Vol. II., p. 521) to devote a short chapter to the termination of the North Sea Inquiry and the finding of the Commission. These could not, with any regard for precision, be included within the record of the first year of the war, with which the preceding two volumes of this history were solely concerned. On the other hand, there is something very fitting and ship-shape in the relegation of the *finale* of this great side-issue of the war to a stage in which it becomes necessary to pick up and tie the ends of several other threads of a rather complicated narrative.

We left the Commission at the begin- of February engaged in privately ning and appreciating the evi- , the Agents of the two Govern- s concerned being busied meanwhile with drawing up their own respective "conclusions" drawn from the evidence on both sides, and the facts established by the Inquiry. These conclusions and accompanying observations were presented at a short public sitting of the Commission of Inquiry on February 13th. The conclusions of the British Government and the observations in support of them need not be quoted in view of the paraphrase previously given of the British case and of the subsequent finding. It is sufficient to say that the conclusions were characterised alike by firmness and courtesy, and that the analysis of the Russian evidence was most skilful and searching. A feature of the observations was a suggested explanation of the grievous error into which the Russian squadron had fallen, and it was evidently the wish of the British representatives to "let down" their opponents as gently as possible.

On the Russian side, too, there was some indication of a *rapprochement.* While maintaining that the cannonade was ordered and executed in the legitimate accomplishment of the "military duties" of the chief of the squadron, and that consequently no responsibility could possibly rest on Admiral Rozhdestvensky or any of his subordinates, the Imperial Government sincerely deplored that there should have been innocent victims of the incident. "The responsibility of the chief of the squadron being eliminated, the Imperial Government had, moreover, no intention whatever to evade material compensation, and would be prepared to indemnify the innocent victims of the fire of its squadron, and to repair the damage caused thereby."

Before the report of the Commission was finally and authoritatively promulgated a fiasco occurred, which, according to a French journal, was the result of a "little intrigue," and had some interest-

ing consequences. An entirely false reading of the report was furnished from a source believed to be trustworthy to a leading agency, and by the latter circulated over the British Isles. In this the finding of the Commission was distinctly favourable to Russia, and it is not surprising that, although a good deal of incredulity was expressed, a number of papers should have spoken rather bitterly on the subject. According to the Paris *Petite Republique*, the English newspapers commenting on the pretended Russian diplomatic victory were allowed to enter Russia, and those containing the alleged text of the report were carefully quoted by the Russian Press. "Thus the Russian public heard on the authority of English newspapers that their Government had scored a great success in the Commission of Inquiry."

In due course the true version of the report was given on February 26th. The document is a lengthy one, consisting of seventeen paragraphs, of which the first twelve and part of the thirteenth are chiefly occupied by an analytic statement of the facts connected with the incident in question. It may, however, be mentioned that in paragraph 8 attention is drawn to the orders which Admiral Rozhdestvensky had given to all the ships, authorising the chief officer on duty to open fire in case of a manifest and imminent attack of torpedo-boats. With regard to these orders, the majority of the Commissioners considered that they involved nothing excessive in time of war, and particularly in the circumstances, which Admiral Rozhdestvensky had every reason to consider very alarming in view of his inability to verify the accuracy of the warnings received from the agents of his Government.

Again, in paragraph 9 it was stated that the "consistent depositions of the British witnesses" made it clear that the trawlers carried their regulation lights, and carried out their work under their customary rules. In paragraph 11 the majority of the Commissioners expressed the opinion that the responsibility for opening fire and for the results of the cannonade sustained by the fishing fleet rested with Admiral Rozhdestvensky.

In the middle of paragraph 13 the report became more judicial, and from this point to the end may be quoted *verbatim* :—

"The majority of the Commissioners declare that they lack precise evidence to identify on what object the ships fired, but the Commissioners unanimously recognised that the boats of the flotilla committed no hostile act, and the majority of the Commissioners, being of opinion that there was no torpedo-boat either among the trawlers or on the spot, the fire opened by Admiral Rozhdestvensky was not justifiable.

"The Russian Commissioner, not believing himself warranted in concurring in this opinion, stated his conviction that it is precisely the suspicious vessels that approached the Russian squadron for a hostile purpose that provoked the fi[re].

"14. Respecting the real objec[t of] this nocturnal firing, the fact that [the] *Aurora* was hit by a few projectiles [of] 47 mm. and 75 mm. would seem to be of a nature to give rise to the supposition that this cruiser, and perhaps even other Russian vessels, delayed on the track of the *Suvaroff* without that vessel being aware of it, may have provoked and attracted the first firing.

"This error may have been caused by the fact that this ship seen from behind showed no visible light, and owing to a nocturnal optical illusion experienced by the observers on the flagship.

"In this connection the Commissioners declared that they lack important information enabling them to ascertain the reasons which brought about the continuation of the firing on the port side. In presence of this conjecture, certain distant trawlers might have been confounded with the original objects, and thus cannonaded directly. Others, on the contrary, may have been hit by a fire directed on objects further off.

"These considerations, moreover, are not in contradiction with the impression of certain trawlers who, finding themselves hit by projectiles and remaining lit up in the radius of the searchlights, might have believed themselves to be the object of direct aim.

"15. The duration of the firing on the starboard side, even from the standpoint of the Russian version, seemed to the majority of the Commissioners to have been longer than appeared necessary.

"But this majority considered that it is not sufficiently informed, as has just been said, with regard to the continuation of the firing on the port side.

"In any case the Commissioners willingly acknowledge unanimously that Admiral Rozhdestvensky personally did all he could from beginning to end to prevent the trawlers, recognised as such, from being the objects of the fire of the squadron. . . . .

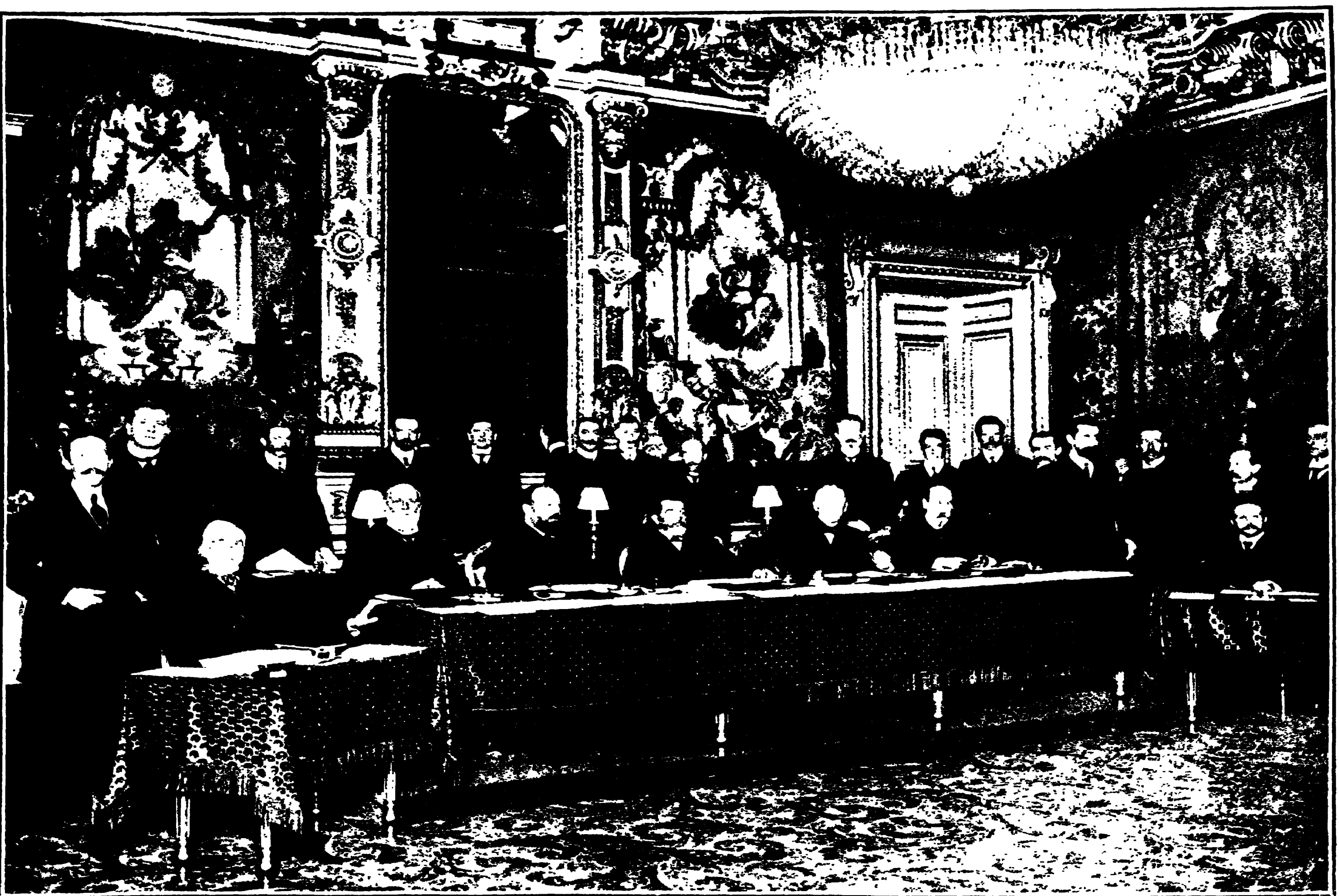
"16. However that may be, the *Dmitri Donskoi*, having eventually intimated her number, the Admiral decided to give the 'stop fire' signal. The line of his ships then continued its route to the south-west without having stopped.

"In this connection the Commissioners are unanimous in recognising that, after the circumstances which preceded the incident and those which give rise thereto, there was at the closing of the firing sufficient uncertainty as to the danger incurred by the section of the ships to decide the Admiral to proceed on his way.

"At the same time, the majority of the Commissioners regret that it did not occur to Admiral Rozhdestvensky, while going through the Straits of Dover, to inform the authorities of the neighbouring maritime Powers that, he having been led into open fire in the vicinity of a group of trawlers, those boats of unknown nationality required assistance.

"17. The Commissioners, in closing this report, declare that their appreciations formulated therein are not in their spirit of a nature to cast any discredit either on the military value or the sentiments of humanity of Admiral Rozhdestvensky and of the *personnel* of his squadron."

It is pleasant to be able to add that the final sitting of the Commission, at which the above report was read, was held in an atmosphere of marked goodwill and friendly satisfaction. After the reading of the report had been concluded, the President, Admiral Fournier, delivered a characteristically charming little address, which was duly followed by other speeches indicative of mutual regard and general gratification that such an international adjustment had been possible. The task of the Commission being thus concluded, the details of its breaking up need not be entered into. But some significance is attached to the outspoken observation of one of the members, the veteran Admiral von Spaun, who was interviewed by a representative of the *Zeit* on his return to Vienna, and spoke with some freedom on several points connected with the proceedings. In particular the Admiral



THE PERSONNEL OF THE NORTH SEA INQUIRY COMMISSION IN PARIS.

dwelt on the fact that the task of the Commission of Inquiry was not to acquit or condemn, but to investigate. This charge was discharged as conscientiously as possible, and upon its conclusion the members of the Commission published their views. The extravagant rumours circulated with regard to the Commission were based almost entirely upon arbitrary supposition. All witnesses were examined publicly, and in their mother tongue. No witness was heard after the public proceedings were closed. As to the merits of the question, it was clear that Admiral Rozhdestvensky had every reason to be on his guard in consequence of the various reports which had reached him, and which certainly made him fear an attack from disguised torpedo-boats. In view of the heavy responsibility incumbent on the commander of a battle fleet, this fact told in the Russian Admiral's favour, while against the Russian standpoint militated the opening of fire without sufficient cause, the excessive prolongation of the cannonade, and the circumstance that the neighbouring maritime authorities were not informed of the occurrence. The Commission endeavoured to employ the mildest form in considering the matter, but the award, nevertheless, showed that the Commission attributed to the Russians the responsibility for what happened. "Therefore I believe," concluded Admiral von Spaun, "that our work will give satisfaction in England without giving too great dissatisfaction in Russia."

In Europe and America the report was generally accepted as having done justice to England while sparing Russian susceptibilities, but it is only natural that in this country there should have been many ready to dissent from the rather indulgent view taken of Admiral Rozhdestvensky's behaviour by the Commission, while equally, of course, the theory of the phantom torpedo-boats was not readily abandoned by Russia. Still the general feeling of relief all round was considerable, and the dignified and friendly manner in which the proceedings of the Commission had been conducted throughout gave unmistakable satisfaction.

The incident was finally closed by the presentation of the Hull fishermen's claims. The amount at which the damages were originally assessed by the fishermen themselves was a little over £100,000, but the British Government, doubtless as the result of a careful scrutiny, reduced the figure to £65,000. The claim, on presentation, was promptly paid.

That the handing over of this indemnity not only closed the incident but left no trace of ill-feeling behind can hardly be admitted. The "jingling of the guinea" may sometimes help to heal the "hurt that honour feels," but not the whole gold reserve of Russia could have left British sailor and fisherfolk with any other conviction than that the North Sea outrage was one for which the actual perpetrators deserved condign punishment.

There is, however, small need to harp on this aspect of the case. More in accord with the ends and aims of this History is it to dwell, as we have already done perhaps sufficiently, on the immense advantages gained, the terrible disasters avoided, by the process of international adjudication resorted to. For it must be carefully borne in mind that the success of such an effort as is here indicated has results altogether apart from the immediate case in question. The fact that instead of our going to war with Russia,

as we were so near doing, over the Dogger Bank episode, and thereby imperilling the peace of the whole world, the difficulty was arranged and satisfaction given by means of an international tribunal, strengthened the hope that other future tangles could be similarly unravelled without having recourse to the stern arbitrament of big guns and cold steel. These triumphs of peace have a cumulative effect which triumphs of war can seldom have, partly because the common interest is to make the most of them, and, in any case, not to interfere with their beneficial results. That is not so with war, in which the first impulse of the beaten side is generally to set about recovering its strength with a view to "getting even" with its successful opponent at some later date.

There is no question, moreover, that the peaceful outcome of the Dogger Bank episode had another good result in smoothing to some extent the future course of the negotiations between this country and Russia with reference to the latter's treatment of neutral shipping, and her fantastic interpretation of the term "contraband of war." It is only fair to Russia to say that she had already given some indication of her wish to deal fairly in vexed questions of this kind. By a queer coincidence, on the same morning that the details of the North Sea outrage were published, it was reported that a decision of the Vladivostok Prize



ADJUSTING THE BLAME: ADMIRAL FOURNIER READING THE REPORT OF THE NORTH SEA COMMISSION.

Court adverse to British owners had been reversed on appeal at St. Petersburg. It is satisfactory to be able to add that after the holding of the international inquiry the tendency seemed to be to treat cases in which injury to neutral shipping was involved with increased regard for British susceptibilities. Not only were the outstanding cases gradually disposed of—not always, it is true, to the satisfaction of owners, but without arousing fresh outbursts of national indignation ; but there was a significant absence of fresh complication of the same sort. This may have been partly owing to the crippled condition of the Vladivostok cruisers, but there were still destroyers at the latter port, and Admiral Rozhdestvensky might have made many opportunities of exercising his right of search had he been so minded. But Russia had learnt her lessons from the Dogger Bank incident. She had, in the first place, had it clearly demonstrated that the British Navy was in a singular state of readiness to enforce, if necessary, retribution for an outrage upon British subjects, however humble. Secondly, it was clear that no amount of Russian bluff would serve to make a properly constituted international tribunal regard questionable Russian performances from a purely Russian point of view. It is hardly too much to say that until the British Fleet cleared for action after the events of October 21st-22nd, and, later, the International Commission at Paris "found" for England on all the essential points of the Inquiry, Russia cherished illusions on both these heads which constituted a grave and constant menace to the peace of Europe.



THE MISSION HOSPITAL SHIP *ALPHA* UNDER A WARSHIP'S SEARCHLIGHT.

The above interesting picture reproduces an official photograph which was taken at midnight, together with others of a similar nature, for the Board of Trade from H.M.S. Hebe (Lieut. and Commander Dalgety), under the superintendence of Mr. Frederick Edwards, consulting engineer to the Mission. The work was naturally done under great difficulties. The series of photographs was placed before the Inquiry Commission in Paris, and proved a valuable and unique link in the evidence on the English side, as they represented as nearly as possible the conditions existing when the Russian fleet fired on her.



Photo: J. J. Archibald.

THE REMOUNT QUESTION IN THE FAR EAST: MONGOLIAN HORSES BEING BROUGHT INTO THE RUSSIAN LINES.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

THE SEQUEL TO HEI-KOU-TAI—THE OPPOSING FORCES—A CAVALRY RAID—INTERESTING LETTERS—THE MUKDEN PROBLEM—JAPANESE PLANS—KODAMA THE STRATEGIST.

AFTER the battle of Hei-kou-tai, described in Chapter LXXXIII., there was an apparent lull of nearly three weeks in the operations along and in the vicinity of the Sha-ho. In both the Russian and Japanese despatches during this period there is little to denote exceptional activity, and nothing to foreshadow such a tremendous sequel as actually resulted. But, judging by the event, and by subsequent disclosures, the situation from the beginning of February to about the 19th was marked by a good deal of important movement, much of it having a direct bearing upon what followed. In particular the cavalry raiding carried out by the Japanese in this interval deserves attention, as it seems to have constituted a very serious portion of the Japanese plan, being intended to bamboozle Kuropatkin into an entirely false conception of the enemy's designs. In fact, Oyama must have employed at least a fortnight in elaborate dust-throwing into the eyes of his adversary, and there is no question that the skill and thoroughness with which this process was carried out largely affected the eventual battle. The Russians, on the other hand, although misguided and misled, showed considerable industry during the first half of February in the construction of fresh entrenchments, some of which were destined to prove a distinct if only temporary

obstacle to the Japanese advance. Beyond these actual performances, again, there was on each side a general falling into place, as it were, of countless units and factors, hardly one of which was not to be called into active requisition in the coming momentous conflict.

The main result of the Battle of Hei-kou-tai, as far as the Russians were concerned, has already been stated to be the disappearance of the last vestige of hope that Mukden would ever serve as a base of successful operations for the recapture of Liao-yang. To this may now be added the growth of a feeling of real apprehension lest the early occupation of Mukden by the Japanese was not now a foregone conclusion. There is evidence of great discouragement at Mukden at this period among both Russian military men and civilians. It was clear that before any fresh Russian move could be made almost the whole of Nogi's army at Port Arthur, swollen by reserves, would have been added to Oyama's forces. Moreover, as a *Times* correspondent observed, Hei-kou-tai had shattered the last of the illusions formerly cherished by the Russian rank and file. "They had been told that they would beat the Japanese as soon as they had them on the plain. After Liao-yang they were told that they would beat the Makaki (leather-skinned dwarfs) as soon as the *kao-liang* was cut and the little tricksters had to fight in the open. After the Sha-ho they were told that the Japanese could not bear the cold, and that they would never stand their ground in a winter engagement." Never was fatuous error more rudely dispelled than was this last in the fighting round Hei-kou-tai and San-de-pu. Small wonder, then, that throughout the Russian armies there was, at the commencement of February, no marked exhibition of ardour or hopefulness at Mukden, and that Kuropatkin's transference of his headquarters to the train was regarded as a pretty sure sign that the Commander-in-Chief himself did not anticipate that the Russian occupation of Mukden would continue much longer.

This feeling of discouragement notwithstanding, the Russians still held an unquestionably strong position. In spite of the severe repulse received at Hei-kou-tai the Russians had reoccupied much of their lost ground, and were busily engaged in defensive spadework. At Mukden reinforcements were arriving constantly, and supplies kept coming in from Sin-min-ting, being brought thither by the Chinese railway in complete disregard of Chinese neutrality. On the Russian left communication between the important coal-mines at Fu-shun and Mukden was being maintained by a most useful auxiliary line constructed by the Russians along the bank of Hun-ho.

The resignation by General Gripenberg of his command, and his hasty departure for Europe, had necessitated some changes, General Kaulbars being transferred from the Third Army to the Second, and the vacant command of the Third being filled by the appointment of General Bilderling. The following distribution of the Russian armies at this period is given on the authority of the Tokio correspondent of the *Times*, writing some weeks after the subsequent great battle.

The First Russian Army under General Liniévitch consisted of three Army Corps, the Second, Third, and Fourth, together with Rennenkampf's independent Corps of Cossacks, making a total of 100 battalions of infantry, 30 batteries of artillery, and 48 sotnias of cavalry.

Kaulbars had four Army Corps—the First (Siberian), the Fifth, the Eighth, and the Tenth—together with a division of rifles. His army mustered 144 battalions of infantry and 38 batteries of artillery. Bilderling's command comprised the First, the Sixth, and the Seventeenth Corps, in all 96 battalions of infantry and 35 batteries of artillery. Then there was the general reserve, consisting of the Sixteenth Army Corps—32 battalions of infantry and 12 batteries of artillery; there was Mishtchenko's cavalry division, consisting of 96 sotnias and four battalions of Za-Amur Border Infantry; there were 34 sotnias of Ussuri Cavalry, Amur Cossacks, and Orenburg Cavalry; and there were finally 36 batteries of horse artillery, mountain guns, field howitzers, siege guns, and unattached artillery. The grand total stood at 376 battalions of infantry, 171 batteries of artillery, and 178 sotnias of cavalry, making numerically about 300,800 rifles, 34,000 gunners (with 1,368 guns), and 26,700 sabres, or a grand aggregate of 361,500 of all arms."

Roughly speaking, the Second Army under Kaulbars constituted the Russian right, the Third Army under Bilderling the Russian centre, and the First Army under Liniévitch the Russian left.

Turning to the Japanese, we find a gradual accumulation of evidence that during the first fortnight of February hardly an hour was lost in steady preparation for a great combined movement against Mukden. The triumphant repulse of the Russians from Hei-kou-tai had, of course, greatly enhanced the security of the Japanese position, and the regular working of the railway to the rear had removed all apprehension as to a possible failure of supplies. Ten or twelve trains daily had run into Liaoyang from Dalny, on the wharves of which steamers from Japan had been discharging their cargoes with admirable regularity. The whole of Nogi's Corps had now been brought up from Port Arthur, and, screened by cavalry, was being concentrated on the Japanese left, partly in rear, partly to the west, of Oku's Army. Lastly, from the mountains to the eastward, there was gradually approaching yet another Japanese Army, the secret of the existence of which had been excellently well kept. This was the "Army of the Yalu," under General Kawamura, a force variously estimated at from three to six divisions, which had landed at the mouth of the Yalu and had marched for some distance by a road parallel to the river's course, and had then disappeared into the mountains. Of the practical use to which this shadowy force was subsequently put the account of the forthcoming battle will afford ample evidence.

That the Japanese were greatly inspirited by the Battle of Hei-kou-tai goes without saying, and equally it may be taken for granted that all ranks of the army looked forward gleefully to a release from the tedium and toil of the winter's sojourn in the trenches. Nor was there any question that the psychological moment for an advance had arrived about the third week in February. A week or two later the breaking up of the ice on the Hun would have rendered the passage of that unfordable river a most serious matter, and indeed, as it happened, some difficulty was actually experienced from this cause. Again an advance across the plains to the west would have been well-nigh impossible when a thaw had set in, and the millet fields were in a state of quagmire.

The strength of the Japanese forces



Photo: D. Fraser.

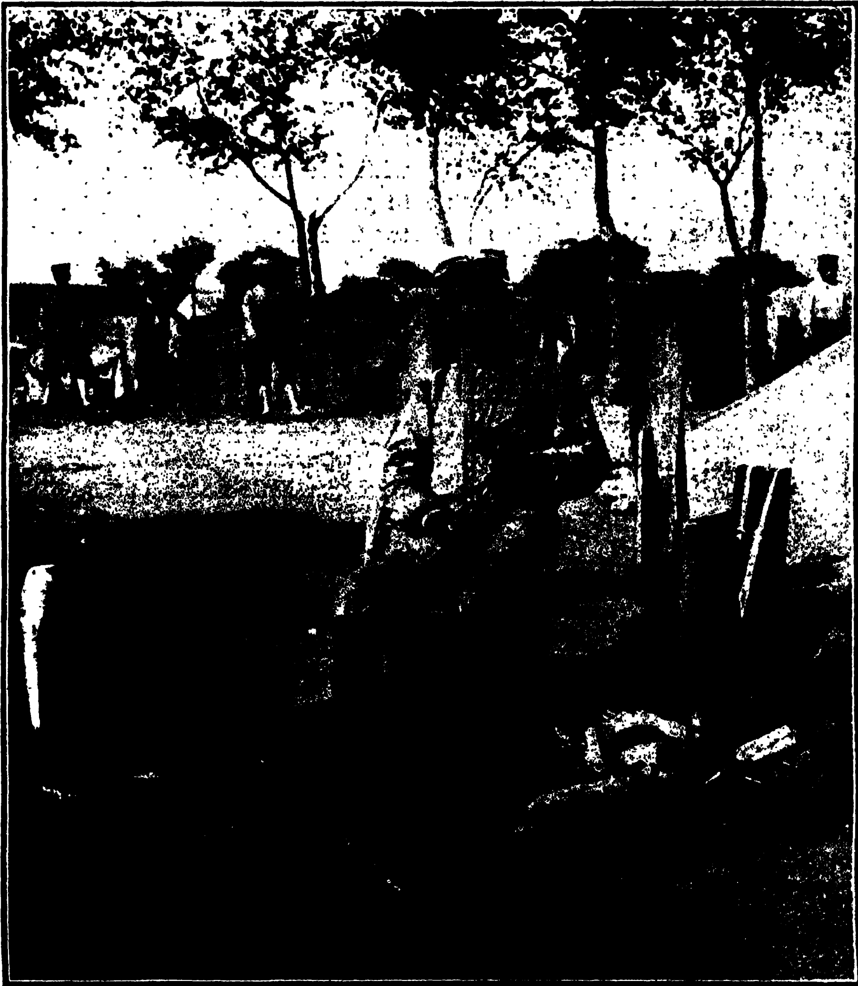
EGYPT IN MANCHURIA.

Japanese soldiers and Chinese coolies building one of the colossal pyramids of fodder of which there were an enormous number erected outside Dalny. Provisions and fodder were collected in this way sufficient to sustain an army of 600,000 men for three months.

cannot be estimated with accuracy, owing to the uncertainty as to the strength of Kawamura's command. But, assuming that he had three divisions, and following the figures given by the Tokio correspondent of the *Times*, we find the number of divisions to be 16, made up as follows: Kawamura, 3; Kuroki, 3; Nozu, 2; Oku, 4; and Nogi, 4. "But when we come to resolve these into bayonets, sabres, and guns, we encounter the difficulty that such matters are wrapped by the Japanese in impenetrable secrecy. A division may be anything from 10,000 to 30,000. At first the Japanese divisions took the field with about 15,000 of all arms, but it may be assumed that at the Battle of Mukden they averaged 25,000, on which basis the Japanese Army aggregated 400,000, and the total forces engaged stand at the enormous figure of 761,500. Japanese journals have alleged that, whereas the two armies engaged at Liao-yang numbered 460,000, and those engaged in the Battle of Sha-ho 580,000, the forces that confronted each other in the Mukden lines aggregated 850,000. Probably there is here some exaggeration, and the more correct estimate is that, roughly speaking, three-quarters of a million of men went into the fight."

Mention has been made above of the Japanese cavalry raiding operations about the middle of February, and it now becomes necessary to deal with these in some detail. At the same time it must not be inferred that the Japanese cavalry alone were thus employed. On February 17th, for instance, it is recorded that a Russian raiding contingent consisting of 15,000 cavalry, 500 infantry, and 20 guns had reached a point only fifteen miles west-north-west of Liao-

yang. But Oku was able to detach a sufficient section of his army to deal with this imposing force, and the attempt was thus completely frustrated. It should be added that a curious reversal of the relative positions formerly attributed to the Russian and Japanese cavalry was now becoming clearly apparent. Not only had the much vaunted individual efficiency of the Cossack been repeatedly outclassed by that of the well-trained and always pugnacious Japanese trooper, not only were the Russian cavalry badly handicapped by scarcity of fodder, but by this time the Russians were mostly mounted on little Chinese animals, many not much more than ponies, while a fair proportion of the Japanese had been



From Stereograph Copyright, 1905, by Underwood & Underwood, London & New York.

ONE OF NOGI'S DOUGHTIEST FIGHTERS.

General Ichinoke, of General Oshima's division, who led some of the most desperate assaults on the forts outside Port Arthur. The picture shows incidentally a few of the many Russian shells that reached the Japanese lines outside the fortress but failed to explode.

supplied with big and fast Australian horses. Accordingly, at the critical moment of a raid, when the time came for getting away or for pursuit, the Russians were at a serious disadvantage, a condition of affairs certainly not anticipated at the commencement of the war even by the most devoted admirers of the Japanese military system.

Of the Japanese cavalry raiding during February it is happily possible, thanks to the *Times* correspondent at Tokio—to whom every historian of the war must be indebted for priceless information absolutely unprocurable from any other source—to give a deeply interesting and instructive example. The raid in question had as its object the cutting of the railway at some point as far north of Mukden as possible, the idea being that the Russians would regard this as a serious turning movement, and would be induced by it to denude Mukden and the immediate neighbourhood of valuable troops.

It is mentioned by way of preface to the description of this achievement that the invariable practice in regard to Japanese military reports is to withhold the number of men engaged in any action. In this case the figure is represented by three asterisks, but collateral evidence tends to show that the raiding detachment mustered 150 sabres. "It consisted of volunteers from four regiments. They represented what is known in Japan as a *kesshitai*, a term inadequately rendered by its only English approximation 'forlorn hope,' the real meaning being 'a force prepared to die.' These men were under the orders of Major Naganuma. Their orders were to cut the railway at some point as far as possible beyond Mukden. On January 9th they set out from Sumapao, near Hei-kou-tai—Sumapao destined to be immortalised two weeks later as the scene of one of the most sanguinary phases in the Battle of Hei-kou-tai. Just at that time Mishtchenko's cloud of cavalry was sweeping down towards Ying-kau and old Niu-chwang along the west bank of the Liao, and Naganuma's squadron, turning their horses' heads northward, left this great force in their rear, but nevertheless rode within field-gun range of the track travelled three days previously by the Cossack thousands. There was no commissariat train. Each trooper carried in his holsters a week's meagre rations of compressed rice, and with the thermometer ranging from 25° to 30° below freezing-point they rode off to find food and shelter where they might. Major Naganuma either knew the country or had for guides some of the many Japanese who, impelled by ambition or love of enterprise, had explored nearly all parts of Manchuria before the war commenced. His objective point was the railway bridge over the Hsinkai River, a little south of Changchun, and therefore 160 miles north of Mukden. The ride to that point from Sumapao, following the devious routes that had to be taken, measured nearly 300 miles, and, as no movement could be made by daylight, forty-three days were required to reach the Hsinkai-ho. Yet the feat was accomplished without the smallest mischance, and without attracting Russian attention.

"On February 11th, just when Marshal Oyama was making his final dispositions for the Battle of Mukden, Naganuma's troop emerged on the bank of the Hsinkai and blew up the railway bridge. The possibility of concealment was now at an end. They gave their horses the bridle and rode southward. Three days after (February 14th) they

were attacked by two sotnias of Cossacks with two field-pieces, but, although outnumbered in the ratio of two to one, Naganuma's men succeeded in routing the enemy and capturing one of his guns as well as a transport waggon, which objects they carried back as trophies."

Incidentally, the raiders had not only carried out their orders, but had also realised with remarkable completeness the idea on which those orders were based. For the Russians did exactly what the Japanese military authorities expected them to do. They immediately despatched a large body of cavalry to Changchun, thus denuding a region through which a Japanese force was to march ten days later in order to carry out the really decisive movement of the Battle of Mukden.

It was not until March 13th that Naganuma, after an absence of sixty-three days, returned at the head of his gallant detachment to the Japanese lines. He was received by Marshal Oyama, who handed to him and his troopers the much-coveted Japanese military testimonial known as a *kanjo.* Naganuma himself wrote two days later to his father in Sendai a letter describing what he had done and the reward he and his men received. This runs as follows :—

"I had always hoped to do something which would help the operations in the great battle of Mukden. Towards the close of December I received orders to form a flying detachment. It consisted of *** men who were prepared to sacrifice their lives. We entered the enemy's lines, and, pushing northward to a great distance, approached the railway, his chief means of communication. On the night of February 11th, our Sovereign's Fête Day, we blew up the bridge over the Hsinkai River, a little south of Changchun, and during the night of the 14th we were attacked by a force of the enemy twice as numerous as our troop and having two guns. We not only repulsed him, but also made a counter-attack which drove him back in confusion. He left in our hands a gun and a transport waggon. These operations, bravely and resolutely carried out by the men of the troop, caused an alarm in the enemy's rear, and the result was that he detached a large body of cavalry from his army about Mukden to meet the menace to his communications, a measure that contributed materially to the success of our enveloping movement in the big battle. On the 13th inst. I proceeded to headquarters, and, in the presence of Field-Marshal Oyama, reported the facts of our sixty days' expedition, whereupon the Field-Marshal handed me the *kanjo,* of which I enclose a copy. I need not speak of the honour this is to myself, but I hope it will give you pleasure as a credit to our family, especially when I tell you that, although throughout our enterprise I had to live on millet soup and to face a temperature sometimes 32° below freezing-point, I am in the best of health, and have not received even a scratch. There is nothing to be said except that fortune favoured us signally in the achievement of this heavy task."

(Copy of the Kanjo.)

(Troopers from four regiments are designated in the original, but this information is not published.)

"The above, under the command of Naganuma Hidebumi, Major of Cavalry, penetrated deep into the enemy's lines, and on the 11th of February wrecked the railway at the Hsinkai River south of Changchun, thus temporarily interrupting the enemy's communications and diverting his troops to this part of the

field. I consider this a distinguished achievement, and I hereby grant a *kanjo.*"

Before leaving this brilliant episode—than which a more fitting prelude to a great battle could hardly be imagined—we may further borrow from the same source of information another letter written by one of Naganuma's captains just before the start of the detachment from Sumapao, and demonstrating vividly indeed the mood of a Japanese officer on the eve of a perilous enterprise. There were two captains in the detachment, one of whom, Captain Nakaya, was killed by a Cossack lance. The other, Captain Asano, survived. It is a pathetic circumstance that he should have signed the following letter by the "child-name" (Osanana-na) by which every Japanese boy is known until he is thirteen years old:—

"To-day, at 10 o'clock, I am to set out at the head of seventy-five men specially selected from the Cavalry Brigade. We are to emerge on the enemy's rear, reconnoitre his position, interrupt his communication and disturb his general plan. Probably you will not hear from me again for fifty or sixty days. We are determined to push far into the Russian lines, and we trust the issue to the guidance of Shaka, believing that now indeed we have an opportunity of repaying, though in an infinitesimally small degree, the favours our country has received during thousands of years. This is the sole thought of your worthless son at this moment, and he goes to his duty with absorbing delight. But we have a long march before us, and many dangers to encounter. For my own part, though I am myself of little account, the men under my command are such fine fellows that I have hope. I beg you not to be uneasy, for I swear that I shall not disgrace my father's name or sully the honour of our family. At this moment of setting out I have written down a verse by way of farewell to life—

"'If life be but a dream,
Why, dreaming, live?
Oh, gladder far to fall
Ere yet the flower fades.'

"(Signed)
"Rikitaro, the child at your knee."

It now becomes necessary to consider the general problem which lay before the Japanese, and the method of solution which they adopted. In the first place it must be borne in mind that, although Mukden was the obvious objective, it was not the Japanese intention to fight in Mukden itself. On the contrary, there were grave political reasons why the ancient capital of the Manchu dynasty and, above all, the Imperial Tombs should be respected. Accordingly the result to be aimed at was rather to squeeze the Russians out of Mukden than to bring them to bay there, and to do this thoroughly it was necessary not only to exert every sort of pressure upon the huge Russian force grouped to the eastward, south, and west of the city, but also to hasten the process of evacuation by threatening the communications with Tie-ling to the north.

A good many details concerning Mukden have been given in previous chapters which need not be recapitulated here. But it is essential to keep in mind the general character of the surrounding country, more especially in relation to the two rivers, the Hun and the Liao. The latter formed the western limit of the area of operations, and between it and the railway running to the

AFTER A MANCHURIAN BATTLE: RUSSIAN GUNS AND AMMUNITION WAGGONS LEFT IN JAPANESE HANDS.



west of Mukden lay an unbroken plain. South and south-east of the city the Hun-ho formed a natural line of defence, while further to the east there was a tangle of mountains, among which, by the way, were posted the best troops at Kuropatkin's command, namely, the Siberian reservists and sharpshooters under Liniévitch, "armed peasants drilled in the hard school of the battlefield," who were skilled in mountain fighting and belonged to the only section of the Russian troops which had any patriotic interest in the war.

A purely frontal attack was out of the question. Against such an advance Kuropatkin would have been able to oppose an impenetrable wall stiffened by his numerous reserves, and effective counter-strokes would probably have been easy. The west flank was the one the turning of which would have the more striking results, and an attack on which would be met with less stubborn resistance, owing to the difficulty of making entrenchments. On the other hand, an advance over such open country would surely be perceived in time to allow Kuropatkin to move a sufficient force into this quarter to hurl back the attackers with serious loss. On the east it would be easy to creep up to within near distance of the enemy almost unperceived, but the barriers once reached would be almost insurmountable, and, indeed, proved to be so in the actual event.

With extraordinary sagacity and marvellous confidence the Japanese addressed themselves to the task of solving the problem by one of the most brilliant combinations of strategy and tactics which the world has ever seen. Briefly, their general plan consisted in the first place of an elaborate effort to mislead Kuropatkin into the idea that their aim was either to strike at the railway to the north, not of Mukden merely but of Tie-ling, or else to turn the Russian left or eastern flank, while in reality a determined movement was being carried out from the west. We have seen how the first delusion was fostered by Naganuma's raid, and how Kuropatkin played into Oyama's hands by detaching Mishtchenko's cavalry from a position in which it might have been used to great advantage, and sending it northwards to Changchun, merely to see how much more thoroughly Japanese cavalry could wreck a line than Cossacks. We have now to see the complement of this in a splendidly vigorous feint—afterwards developing into a real attack—on the Russian left by Kawamura's army, in order to cover a rapid *détour* on the part of Nogi to Sin-min-ting, followed by a swift advance from the latter place upon the western defences of Mukden and the railway to the immediate north.

The breadth and completeness of this design are very impressive, the more so when the most careful reflection fails to reveal any other process by which anything like similar results could be attained. Even assuming, as we have done, that the Japanese outnumbered the Russians by some 40,000 men, that numerical superiority was not by any means sufficient to warrant an attempt on Oyama's part to envelop Kuropatkin by any ordinary straightforward methods. Yet by the employment of artifice, coupled by the most perfect co-ordination of his various armies, he was able, if not to envelop completely a force not appreciably smaller than his own, at any rate to squeeze it out of a strong position and to damage it very seriously in the process. Without artifice, deceit,

delusion, dust-throwing, or some such dissimulatory methods, the result of the Battle of Mukden might have been altogether different, and it is because something of the sort was the keynote of this extraordinary operation that the present writer has devoted this chapter mainly to preliminary elucidation. Where a battle is conducted on more or less straightforward lines, it is often preferable to tell the story of it first, and then to discuss the merits of the strategy which led up to it. But when a tremendous conflict lasting over weeks of fighting is based upon a gigantic hoax it seems wise to prevent vain imaginings by giving at least a plain hint of the underlying and, at first, carefully concealed design.

In this connection a few words must be given parenthetically to the man to whose genius the conception of this brilliant scheme is supposed in great measure to be due. Lieutenant-General Baron Kodama has already been mentioned in the First and Second Volumes of this work as, perhaps, the greatest "Organiser of Victory"—as distinct from leadership—in the Japanese Army. "Yamagata," wrote a correspondent before Port Arthur in October, 1904, "stays in Tokio, one foot in the grave, holding himself to work with will and prayer, snowed with seventy years, in counsel with the Emperor; Oyama, loved by the people, always a figurehead, goes to command the northern armies; Nogi is given the glory of reducing the 'Gibraltar of the East'; but Kodama, with his hands on everything, the brains of all, unifies the whole. I saw him leave Tokio, cheered by the coolies of the streets, who, like the Emperor and his marshals, know already the campaign is in his hands. He went straight to Liao-yang and saw the first great blow struck at Kuropatkin. Then he came here, stayed two days, saw his plans being effected to his satisfaction, and got back to Liao-yang before the battle of the Sha-ho." Highly typical of Kodama is this description of his comprehensive methods, and hardly less illuminating is the graphic pen-sketch which follows of "a tub of a man in a fur coat and a red cap, with two braid stripes, which told him to be a lieutenant-general. Swathed to his ankles in an overcoat of thick martens, he looked huge; but the two red braids and the Star of Nippon were level with my armpit. When he shook hands he lost all the clumsiness of the fur. When his fingers shook mine there passed from them the spirit of the island empire—its tininess, its audacity, its febrile intensity—for the grip was sinuous and sure as the clasp of a wild thing, hearty and elegant as a comrade's. He walked with the stately swing of a star actor, poised his cigar with the air of a man of leisure, and smiled roguishly on me as he talked." Kodama, it may be added, was in his fifty-third year, when, after seeing his plans for the reduction of Port Arthur crowned at last with complete, if costly, success, he turned his attention to the Mukden problem, the complexities of which we have been trying to unravel.

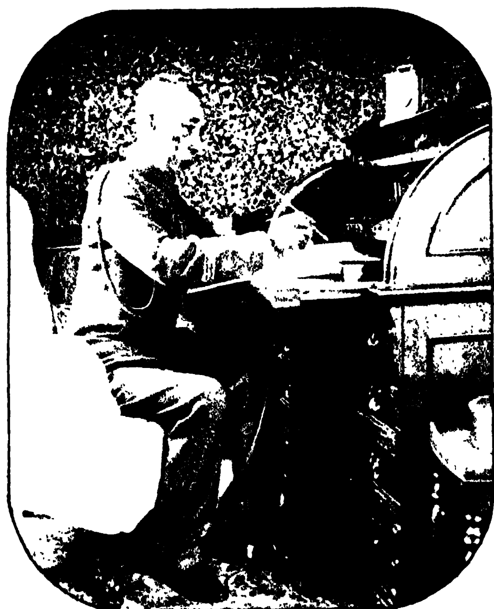
In the subsequent account of the actual battle, or, rather, prolonged series of battles, round Mukden the arrangements instituted by the *Times* Tokio correspondent, in which the field of operations is divided into five sectors, will be followed. In the first or eastern sector we have Kawamura's army approaching from the direction of the Yalu. In the second or east central



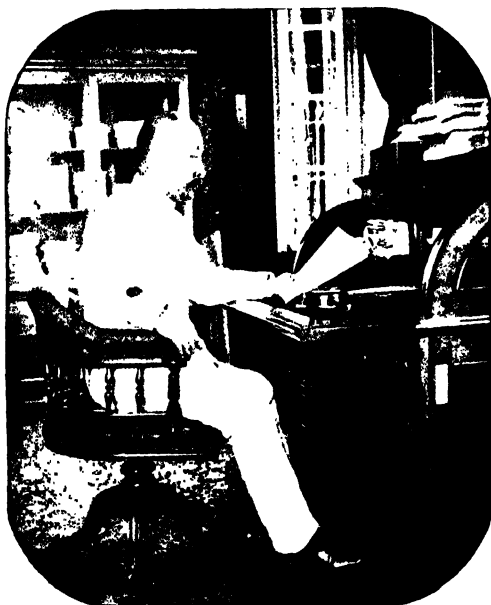
FIELD-MARSHAL THE MARQUIS OYAMA, MARCHIONESS OYAMA, LADY HISAKO OYAMA, THEIR DAUGHTER, AND THEIR TWO SONS IN THE GARDEN OF THE OYAMA HOME IN TOKIO.



GENERAL BARON KODAMA, CHIEF OF THE FIELD MARSHAL'S STAFF, ON THE STEPS OF HIS TOKIO HOME ON THE EVE OF HIS DEPARTURE FOR THE FRONT, JULY 6TH, 1904.



FIELD MARSHAL THE MARQUIS YAMAGATA, AT HIS DESK IN THE WAR OFFICE, TOKIO, JAPAN.



GENERAL TERAUCHI, MINISTER OF WAR, AT HIS DESK IN THE WAR OFFICE, TOKIO, JAPAN.

sector Kuroki's army will be found to be operating. The third or central sector is occupied largely by the army of Nozu. Oku's army acts in the fourth or west central sector, and in the fifth or west sector the great turning movement of the operation comes to be carried out by the army of Nogi. How each army performed its allotted task will now be told in detail, and the gradual development of the "plot" can hardly fail to arouse admiring interest. But the old adage that there is nothing new under the sun will be found to receive partial illustration in the tactical *dénouement.* "The five Japanese armies were to form a crescent whose cusps, over ninety miles apart at first, would gradually draw together, the western cusp, however, being finally and suddenly thrown forward so as to form a closed curve with the eastern." Although the fact seems to have been overlooked by commentators on the battle, it is strange how closely this resembles the idea of the Zulu *impi* with its "chest" and "horns," the latter intended to close gradually until the enemy were completely surrounded, and subsequently — sometimes — completely wiped out.



HOUSE OF THE MAYOR OF DALNY, USED BY FIELD-MARSHAL THE MARQUIS OYAMA AS HEADQUARTERS PRIOR TO THE GREAT ADVANCE AGAINST LIAO-YANG.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

THE BATTLE OF MUKDEN—FIRST PHASE—ADVANCE OF KAWAMURA'S ARMY—CAPTURE OF CHIN-HO-CHENG—KUROKI'S TASK—A TYPICAL ATTACK—KAWAMURA PUSHING ON —KUROPATKIN'S MISTAKE.

IN the preceding chapter it was explained at some length that the key-note of the Japanese strategy anterior to the Battle of Mukden was the desire to delude Kuropatkin into the belief that a great turning movement from the east was about to be attempted. On the eve of the actual fighting yet another addition was made to the numerous artifices by which this elaborate delusion was fostered. It will be remembered that in detailing the Japanese forces during the early part of February General Nogi was credited with all the four divisions which he had brought with him from Port Arthur, and which for a time were concentrated on the extreme Japanese left. Shortly before the great battle one of these divisions, the 11th, was detached and sent to the extreme east, where it joined the Army of the Yalu under General Kawamura, which was then in the Shin-king district some sixty miles to the south-east of Mukden.

The object of this transfer was probably twofold. In the first place the habit of the Japanese of looking far ahead induces the belief that the duty proximately assigned to the Army of the Yalu—as distinct from the Army of Manchuria—was the capture of Vladivostok. The addition to it, therefore, of a division with special experience in the attack of a fortress was the most natural thing in the world. But the transposition served another purpose. It was intended still further to encourage the notion that the real attack upon Mukden was to be made against the extreme Russian left. Care was taken to let the Russians know that the division was changing ground, and every means possible was used to make them believe that Nogi's other three divisions were also being sent eastward, while all the time they were lying snugly ensconced behind a vigilant cavalry screen in a little town to the west of Liao-yang. Kuropatkin was completely taken in by this final preliminary manœuvre, and hurriedly drafted a large force into the Fu-shun region on his extreme left by means of his auxiliary line of railway along the Hun-ho.

We have now to follow the fortunes of Kawamura's army, the operations of which in the eastern sector constitute for the most part the first phase of the Mukden battle. What the army of the Yalu underwent in the three or four weeks preceding its appearance upon the scene of active fighting may never be known, but it is certain that the march up from the Yalu into the mountains to the south-east of Mukden must have taxed even Japanese endurance to the utmost. The distance must have been about 125 miles, the "going" was difficult in the extreme, and the temperature always about twenty degrees below freezing point. Bivouacking for some twenty-five nights in succession without

shelter Kawamura's men must have suffered considerably, and have fully deserved the special commendation afterwards bestowed upon them by the Mikado for their fortitude in facing such "piercing cold and inclement weather."

Kawamura's army began, so to speak, to come into action on February 19th. It moved in two large columns, the right taking the road to Tita, which lies some seventeen miles south-east of Fu-shun, while the left marched in the direction of Ma-chun-tun, which is about ten miles to the south-east of Tita. Both columns marched up from the south-east, and on the 20th and 21st came in contact with the enemy's outposts, which were duly driven in. On the 22nd the right column found itself opposed by a regiment of infantry and a battery of artillery in an entrenched position, and these had to be expelled before the march on Tita could be fairly commenced.

Meanwhile Kawamura's left column had on the 23rd encountered a much more serious obstacle in the formidable defiles at Chin-lo-cheng, some twenty-two miles to the south-east of Ma-chun-tun, about sixty miles east of Liao-yang.

To the south of Chin-ho-cheng runs the Tai-tse-ho, the river which played such a conspicuous part in the battle of Liao-yang. Kawamura's men had occupied points on the left or southern bank of the Tai-tse on the 19th, but had not been able to proceed at once to the attack of Chin-ho-cheng owing to the steep nature of the ground, and the fact that the ice in the river was beginning to melt. However, the force gradually struggled across, and on the 23rd moved to the attack in a snow-storm so severe that objects could hardly be distinguished at arm's length. When it is remembered that three-quarters of Kawamura's army was composed of officers and men who had only left Japan the previous month, and very few of whom had had any experience of actual fighting beyond the outpost affairs of the past few days, it is easy to understand what a terrible ordeal was being undergone by this devoted column.

Ahead of the Japanese lay a strong position, strongly occupied, and rendered trebly difficult of capture by those arts of field engineering in which the Russians have always proved themselves proficient. There were several rows of defensive works protected by obstacles, and in front of these were land mines of a formidable nature, calculated specially to check the ardour of comparatively inexperienced soldiers. According to the Japanese despatches, the Russian forces holding the Chin-ho-cheng passes included sixteen battalions of infantry and twenty guns—in fact, an entire division, said to be the 71st of the Russian Army. To attack such a force in such a stronghold three divisions would not have left much margin of strength; but it does not seem likely that the Japanese had more than two at most, though one of these was probably the redoubtable 11th, which had faced far more fearful risks and obstacles at Port Arthur.

The attack on the 23rd was not successful. Despite the most strenuous efforts, and a brilliant display of courage, the troops failed to surmount the precipitous slopes with their deadly fringe of spitting rifles and roaring guns. Fiercely the line of glorious little Japanese infantry pressed through the snow, only to be checked and here and there sadly thinned by the scathing fire of a well-posted enemy. From even the Russian account it would seem that part of

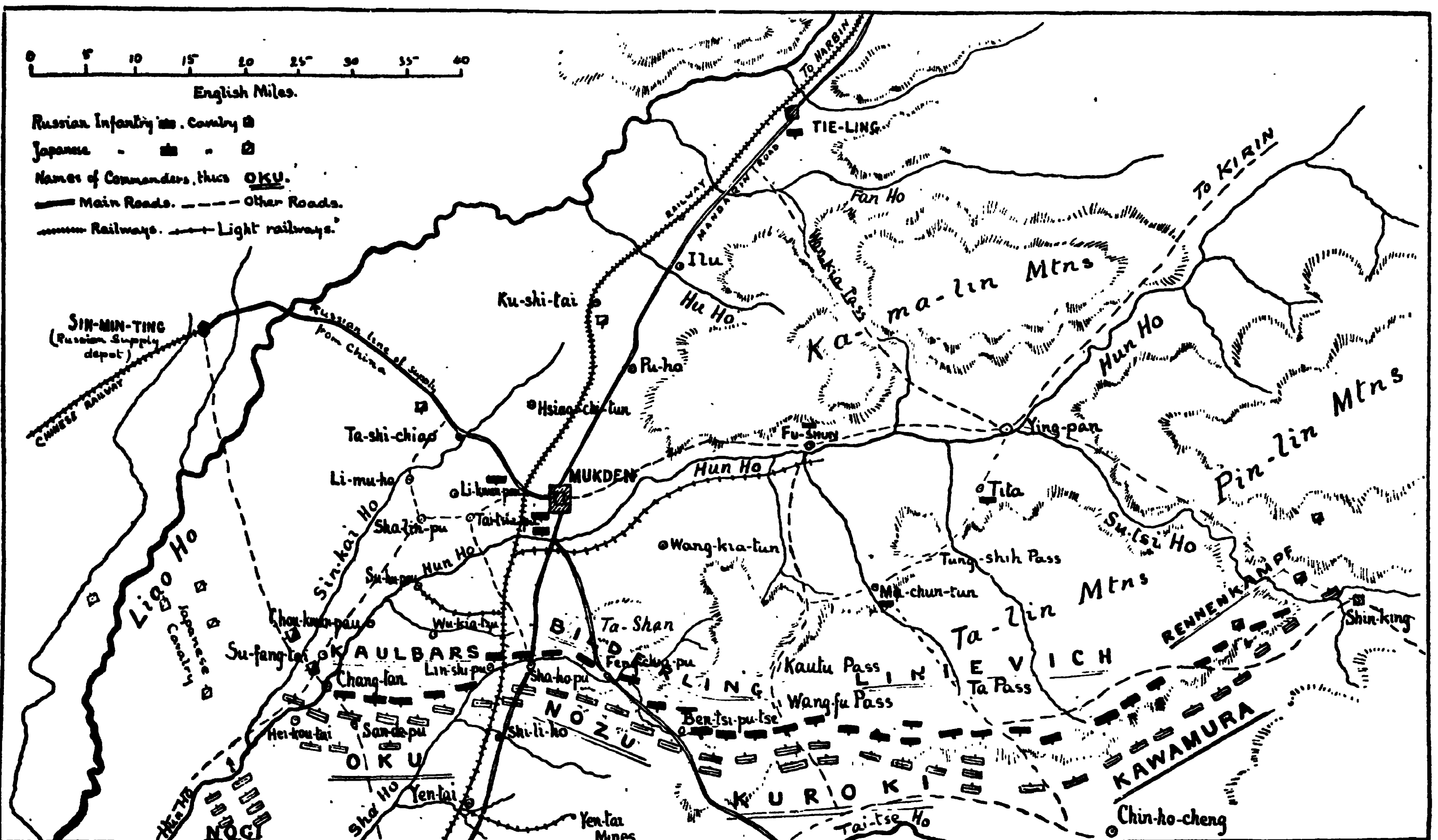
the attacking force got home, or at least pressed the Russians very closely. But the ground so hardly won could not be maintained, and at nightfall the Japanese were compelled to bivouac in the snow on the very threshold of a strong and still practically intact position.



From Stereograph Copyright, 1905, by Underwood & Underwood, London and New York.

ONE OF THE GREAT JAPANESE II-INCH GUNS DRAGGED MANY MILES OVER ROUGH COUNTRY TO BE PLACED IN POSITION IN THE MANCHURIAN HILLS.

One is so familiar with this position of affairs in relation to this war that it is not at all surprising to find the Japanese at daybreak renewing the attack with increased vigour and in superior force. During the early morning the struggle became most bitter, and at



FIRST PHASE: FEBRUARY 19TH TO FEBRUARY 26TH.

Kawamura, coming from the south-east with the "Army of the Yalu," moves in two columns against Tita and Ma-chun-tun on the Russian left. His left column takes Chin-ho-cheng. Kuroki commences a movement against the eastern flank of the Russian defences in the Sha-ho Valley, his right extending to the north-east with a view to effecting a junction with Kawamura's left.

some points the fighting reached a pitch of intensity probably not surpassed at any period of the operations. The Japanese now began to encounter the land mines, and, to quote the simple but expressive language of a Russian newspaper correspondent, "the hollows made by the explosions were filled with their dead." But, nothing daunted, the gallant attackers rushed on, striding over the heaped-up corpses, until about ten o'clock they were close up to the main Russian trenches. A terrific conflict now ensued. It was snowing heavily, so heavily that the bodies of those who fell were soon covered, thus rendering the scene in one way less dreadful. But while the dead were being thus gently hid under their white palls the living closed frantically in savage hand-to-hand combat. It had come to the bayonet at the finish, and to that weapon wielded by burly Russians and agile Japanese the driving snow made little difference. The firing had necessarily for the most part ceased, but the struggle was not without a noisy accompaniment. For here, as so often at Port Arthur, the hand-grenade played a prominent part, punctuating the clatter of steel with sharp explosions, followed by the groans of those painfully wounded by the flying fragments of burst metal.

The end of even this tremendous assault might have proved doubtful but for the Japanese foresight in carrying out a flank attack. This last, closely pressed in conjunction with the desperate frontal attack, decided the day. Towards evening the Russians were compelled to evacuate the position, and retired northward after setting Chin-ho-cheng on fire. Their total casualties were estimated at over a thousand, and they left a hundred and fifty dead on the field. The Japanese captured three machine-guns and a quantity of rifles and ammunition, and they took twenty-four prisoners.

There is evidence to show that the Russian resistance at Chin-ho-cheng was not only difficult to overcome by reason of the strength of the position and the number of troops by which it was held. The Japanese despatches bear testimony to the tenacity with which the defenders clung to a stronghold that every soldier must have known to be of very serious importance. Kuropatkin, too, spoke warmly of the many acts of bravery performed by detached bodies of troops in the course of this operation. "For instance, the company defending Se-lin Pass, nine versts south-west of Chin-ho-cheng, repulsed several attacks of the enemy, who was in much greater strength. One attack came to within fifteen paces of our position. Two companies defending the base at Beresneff Hill sustained a hard bayonet fight, in which two commanders were wounded. One of them, Captain Vellovitch, received a bayonet thrust in the hand, and was forcibly carried away by the remainder of the company. Another company, sent to prevent the enveloping of the left flank of our position, was surrounded by the enemy on three sides. It kept him at a distance by means of a well-sustained fire. Even after having exhausted all the cartridges, and in spite of the retreat of the whole of the rest of the detachment, these two companies did not leave their position until after they had received an order to do so in writing."

Before we turn from the capture of Chin-ho-cheng to certain other aspects of the first phase of the battle of Mukden it is interesting to note that the Shin-king region in the western portion

of which the Japanese were now operating, is a battle-ground very famous in Chinese history. In the seventeenth century Noor Hachu, the Manchu chieftain, invaded China from Shin-king, then the Manchu capital, at the head of a vast body of Manchu cavalry, and several very important battles took place in the neighbourhood. These led to an attack on Mukden, which was captured from the Chinese in 1621, and, later, Noor-Hachu set his son on the throne of the Celestial Empire as the first ruler of the existing Manchu dynasty.

It is now necessary to leave the operations in the eastern sector—to adopt the distribution of areas outlined in the preceding chapter—in order to see whether any sympathetic movement is taking place amongst any of the four Japanese armies marshalled to the west. It will save trouble if we say at once that in what we have noted as the first phase of the battle—that is from February 19th to February 26th inclusive—the armies of Nogi, Oku, and Nozu may be regarded as to all intents and purposes still behind the scenes, though, we may be sure, none the less eagerly awaiting their cues to "come on." But this was not the case with the army of Kuroki, occupying the east central sector, which on February 24th commenced to take an important part in the proceedings. To this army was assigned a double *rôle*. In the first place it had to break down a group of formidable works forming the eastern flank of the Russian defences in the Sha-ho valley. These works guarded the approach to a road leading northwards from Pen-si-hu on the Tai-tse river to Fu-shun on the Hun-ho, through the Wang-fu and Kau-tu Passes. Months of labour had been expended on these works, and merely the cracking of such a hard nut was, one would have thought, a task of sufficient difficulty for an army of three divisions only. But it is characteristic of Japanese strategy in any great combined movement that each army should be given not only an immediate but also a secondary objective. Accordingly, to Kuroki was also assigned the duty of extending his right in a north-easterly direction with a view to beating back the Russians posted to the south-east of the Ta Pass, and subsequently effecting a junction with Kawamura's left.

Of the earlier operations against the eastern flank of the Sha-ho defences there are no precise details available, but a reference occurs in one of the accounts of the battle of Mukden to a particular attack the date of which is not given, but which may well have taken place at the end of the first phase. It was a night attack, and, like the two assaults on Chin-ho-cheng, was delivered in a blinding snowstorm. It was known that the fighting would be of a desperate character, and before moving out to the attack the Japanese soldiers bade each other farewell, as is the custom in the Mikado's army where an enterprise includes but the two alternatives signified by the badge of one of our own most famous regiments, namely, death or glorious success.

The falling flakes proved a not unmixed evil, for, as the line of the attackers crept stealthily forward, the snow was seen to be outlining with comparative distinctness the positions of a number of those troublesome obstacles to which the French have given the expressive name of *trous de loup*, and which are simply small pits dug in the shape of an inverted pyramid, each pit being provided with a sharply pointed

stake fixed in the bottom. These traps are generally only about two feet or two feet six inches deep—if they were deeper they might serve the enemy's skirmishers as ready-made rifle-pits—but in the storm and stress of an attack they may catch numbers of the unwary and inflict some very nasty injuries. In this case the friendly snow indicated the whereabouts of the Russian stake-pits so clearly that not a single casualty resulted from them.

Another lesson in connection with the negotiation of "obstacles" was afforded by this particular attack. The Russian position was not only protected by *trous de loup*, but also fringed with wire entanglements apparently of the low-lying variety. Hitherto the usual plan of dealing with wire entanglements had been that which we followed in South Africa of providing the men, or at any rate a certain proportion of them, with strong wire nippers. But the Japanese had found this method hardly rapid enough for their purposes, and here, accordingly, we see them using long balks of timber as levers wherewith to prise a whole breadth of wire entanglement out of the way.

The precise result of this attack is not stated, but it is mentioned on the authority of the *Times* Correspondent at Tokio, that it "prefaced an incident shocking, but unhappily not novel where Russian troops are concerned; the enemy concentrated their fire on a field hospital over which the Red Cross flag was waving conspicuously and, maintaining the cannonade for some hours, killed a number of the wounded."

Here we may for the present leave Kuroki with the passing remark that on February 26th his right had commenced its extension to the north-east with a view to the subsequent junction with Kawamura's left.

Reverting to Kawamura, we find already some indication of a marked tactical difference between the battle of Mukden and most of the preceding operations. Hitherto it had somewhat frequently occurred that the Japanese, after making an important capture, had been either too exhausted or too cautious to press the pursuit with anything like the vigour and thoroughness which had characterised the attack. Especially was this the case during Oku's advance up the Liao-tung Peninsula, and even in much more recent conflicts there had been observable a reluctance to take advantage of what Western critics regarded as the logical consequences of an important success. It may be that this was due to the almost passionate regard of the Japanese for precise co-ordination, and to the fear lest, if individual generals were encouraged to push their successes home, the general scheme of strategy might be endangered by the premature arrival of a force at a point on the warlike chess-board several squares ahead of that which it had been originally timed to reach on a certain day. Be this as it may, the battle of Chin-ho-cheng saw a notable departure from this rather feeble tradition. Realising that envelopment of an enemy so nearly equal in strength to himself would be out of the question if that enemy were simply pushed out of one position to occupy another, with hardly diminished forces and with leisure to recover order and discipline, Oyama had given orders that in all the ensuing operations pursuits were to be carried out with the utmost vigour. At all hazards the enemy was to be crippled as much as possible, and the energy displayed in this direc-

tion on the Japanese right was doubtless further intended to foster the idea that the real turning movement against Mukden was being made from this quarter.



GENERAL COUNT NOZU.

Acting on these instructions, the Japanese lost no time in making good their foothold at Chin-ho-cheng, but pressed strongly forward, and reaped an instant reward from their determined policy. Had they refrained from pursuit the Russians would assuredly have re-formed in the Ta Pass and stubbornly contested that position also. This might have meant that for many succeeding days practically the whole depth of the Ta-ling Range would have intervened as

a barrier between Kawamura's left column and Ma-chun-tun, with the result that the whole movement on which the Japanese battle-plan was based would have been delayed, possibly beyond hope of recovery. As things were, fortune favoured the brave. Despite their previous exhibition of tenacity, the Russians, once expelled from Chin-ho-cheng, were kept on the trot, and were driven unceremoniously through the Ta Pass to a place some seven miles beyond it called San-lu-nyu. Here the Russians stood, and, as will be seen later, the resistance offered from this point onward was serious enough to make the Japanese thankful to have gained possession of the Ta Pass with so little trouble.

As far as the Japanese were concerned, the first phase of the battle of Mukden was now over, and we may pause awhile to note the results secured. The first thought that will strike the student is the extremely opportune nature of the Japanese advance, and the singular forethought displayed in arranging the preliminaries for the execution of a project at once so vast and so complex. For we have to go back, as has been explained, several weeks to account for the despatch of the army of the Yalu from Japan in time to permit of its arrival before Chin-ho-cheng in time to take part in this enormous operation. In point of fact Tokio can hardly have recovered from the burst of rejoicing consequent on the fall of Port Arthur when the troops composing Kawamura's command were silently shipped on transports, and carried across to Korea, making some point on the northern bank of the Ya-lu the starting point of their adventurous and toilsome march. There is something curiously impressive in the strategy which so swiftly began to arrange a sequel to the capture of the great southern stronghold of the enemy, not only by bringing the troops released from Port Arthur into the field, but also by despatching an entirely fresh army to the Manchurian field of operations.

There is instruction, too, to be gained from the skill and judgment which Japan showed in selecting a method of extra reinforcement bristling with difficulties and hardships, but really preferable because it permitted the desired object to be gained with completeness and secrecy. In the history of war there is hardly any instance of more dramatic appositeness than the appearance almost out of the clouds of the army of the Ya-lu at the commencement of the battle of Mukden. But what should compel our admiration is, of course, not so much the sudden entrance upon the scene of at least 70,000 or 80,000 men of the existence of which outside Japan few besides the Japanese were at all precisely aware, as the patient scheming which foresaw when these troops would be most badly wanted, and arranged for their arrival, after weeks of laboured travelling, in the very nick of time.

Of the valour shown by these raw soldiers in the capture of positions of great natural strength, defended by a brave and seasoned enemy, sufficient has, perhaps, been said already. But a word may be added as to the confidence of the Japanese military authorities in taking for granted such a brilliant performance. Even allowing for the presence of the 11th Division from Port Arthur, it was a bold inference to draw from previous successes, and from Japanese military virtue, to make certain that the wall of the Ta-ling Range would be so readily breached. Especially was this the case when it was part of the Japanese plan to

attract as many of Kuropatkin's reserves as possible to this quarter, thus rendering the defence more surely difficult to overcome.

Of the military results of the first phase there is not much to be said beyond what has already been said in this and in the preceding chapter. Tactically the operation had not yet developed, for the main movement, that of Nogi's army on the extreme left, had not even commenced. But, for all that, we shall soon perceive from the Russian line of action that to a large extent the very end of this momentous struggle was, as far back as February 26th, being foreshadowed. The success of the Japanese plan, as we have shown, depended mainly on the question whether Kuropatkin would or would not allow himself to be hoaxed. If the first phase had proved nothing else, it had demonstrated the gullibility of the Russian Commander-in-Chief beyond the shadow of a doubt, and henceforth, although there was plenty of hard work and much strenuous fighting still in store, it was all comparatively plain sailing for the Japanese.

For the mass of Kuropatkin's reserves, instead of remaining where they could help materially to render a Japanese advance over a treeless plain a very deadly performance, had now been hurried off to the extreme Russian left in order to assist an already considerable force to repel, not a turning movement on a colossal scale, but a mere diversion carried out by three or four divisions. One can understand with what pride Kuropatkin employed his little auxiliary line along the Hun to Fu-shun for this purpose, and how confidently he reckoned to oppose an impenetrable front on this flank to the Japanese advance.

Alas, poor Kuropatkin! The error he committed here was tragically decisive in more ways than one. But the final plea may be entered on his behalf that in all probability he failed exactly where nine out of ten others would have failed in similar circumstances. He was beguiled, tricked, fooled utterly, it is true, but the process was carried out with such an amazing combination of audacity, cunning, and patience, that it is not easy to say how many of those modern generals whom we regard with reverence would not have been similarly misled. It is easy, of course, to talk of a defective intelligence department, and to suggest that a few smart cavalry reconnaissances might have produced sufficient information to give Kuropatkin an idea of what the enemy intended. But intelligence of a sort was coming in freely—the Japanese took care that it should—and it was by no means easy for Kuropatkin to say that reports, which all pointed lucidly and coherently to the same conclusion, were but the natural outcome of the enemy's almost superhuman artfulness. As for cavalry reconnaissances, one cannot readily perceive in what direction these could have been carried out with any hope of practical results. Mishtchenko's great raid, even at the expense of a violation of Chinese neutrality, had not accomplished enough to warrant a repetition of that performance. On the actual Japanese left the enemy's cavalry screen was so dense that it could hardly be penetrated by a fly, and to the east and south-east the mountains and the weather rendered any accurate observation of Kawamura's approach practically impossible.

If, then, at the end of the first phase of the battle of Mukden we see Kuropatkin outmanœuvred, if not already half beaten, it is more gracious to dwell

on the difficulties of his position than to fling at him scraps of that popular form of military wisdom which sprouts so freely after the event. Nor must we, because we are so wise, and have partly anticipated the *dénouement*, lose our interest in the great Mukden drama at this early stage. As yet only two Japanese armies out of five have been on the stage, and one of these has not had much to say. There is plenty of exciting work in prospect, and many fearful risks have to be run, much laborious hammering has to be got through, before the well-ordered hosts of Japan can hope to enter Mukden in triumph not less complete than that enjoyed by Noor-Hachu's horde of Manchu horsemen after their great invasion nearly three long centuries ago.

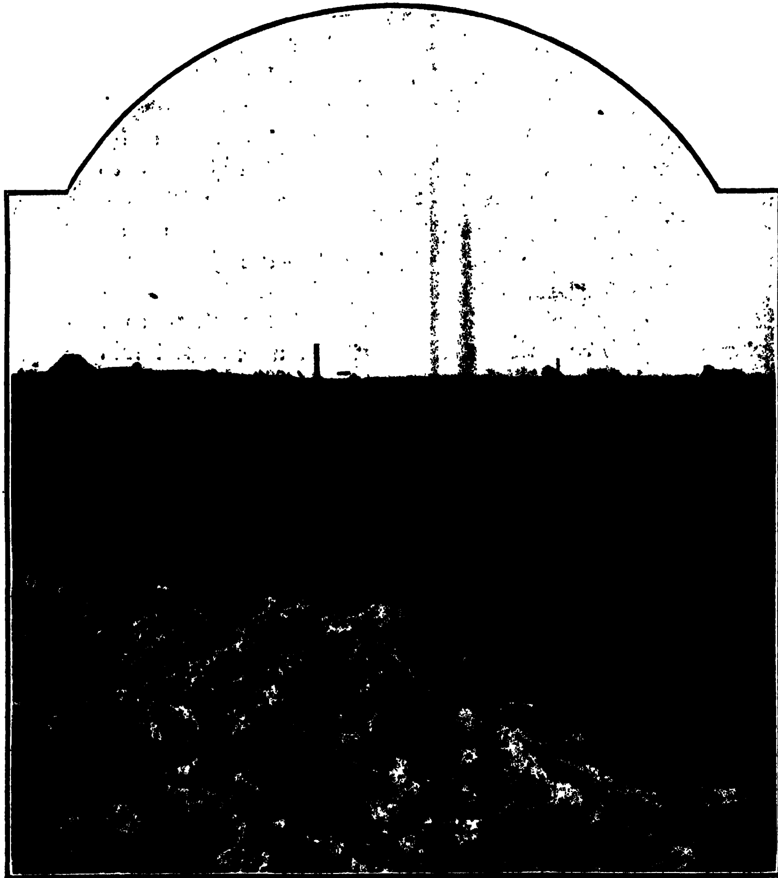


Photo: T. Ruddiman Johnston, Tokio.

JAPANESE TRANSPORT CROSSING THE HUN-HO.

CHAPTER XC.

THE BATTLE OF MUKDEN (*CONTINUED*)—SECOND PHASE—KAWAMURA CHECKED—PASSES CAPTURED BY KUROKI—NOZU'S GREAT CANNONADE—OKU CROSSES THE HUN—NOGI'S TURNING MOVEMENT COMMENCES.

THAT which is regarded for the purposes of this History as the second phase of the Battle of Mukden included but three days, namely, February 27th and 28th, and March 1st. But in some respects this is the most interesting period in the whole operation, since not only was it marked by some very vigorous fighting, but it also witnessed at any rate the earlier developments of the Japanese plan of action all along the line. To demonstrate this last fact the more clearly, the writer will ask the reader to start by once more placing himself in the eastern sector of operations; he can thus continue to follow the movements of each of the five armies in succession, beginning with the resumption of Kawamura's progress, and ending with the singularly dramatic turn given to the proceedings by the *détour* of Nogi's three divisions on the extreme Japanese left.

We left Kawamura's left column at the end of the first phase pursuing the Russians after the capture of Chin-ho-cheng along the road leading to Ma-chun-tun. Simultaneously the right column was now driving the enemy before it on the road to Tita. On both roads the Russians offered strenuous resistance, and fighting continued throughout the 26th and 27th. On the 28th the two columns reached Ma-chun-tun and Tita respectively, and found their way barred at each of these places by strong defensive works with garrisons much more numerous than that of Chin-ho-cheng. For Kuropatkin's line along the Hun-ho had been kept busy, and now quite a large part of the general reserve—the latter consisted, we are told, of the whole of the 16th Army Corps—had been brought from Mukden to Fu-shun and had marched thence to Ma-chun-tun and Tita. Kawamura lost no time in attacking the two positions in front of him, but to no immediate purpose. Indeed, he was destined to spend a full week before Ma-chun-tun and Tita, and had to be strongly reinforced by Kuroki before he succeeded in producing an eventual impression. As far as the second phase was concerned, this delay did not matter much, for it was still necessary to keep up the illusion that Kawamura was carrying out the big movement of the operation. But from the first the work done by the army of the Yalu, with the associated 11th Division from the former army of Port Arthur, could not but have been extremely costly in the matter of casualties, and, as time went on, the continued resistance of Ma-chun-tun and Tita became serious owing to the increasing mildness of the weather and the gradual breaking up of the ice on the Hun-ho.

Throughout the second phase Kuroki was busily engaged in his double duty of smashing the Sha-ho defences and extending his right to the north-east in

order to get into touch with Kawamura. The latter task was now becoming of grave importance, as it involved pushing back a strong Russian force which was originally occupying a sort of recess in the Japanese right between what have been denominated the eastern and east central sectors. It was obvious that, unless this force was dealt with, it would, as Kawamura advanced towards Fu-shun, lie dangerously along the latter's left flank. The Russians in the recess were, as usual, strongly entrenched. The whole of Kuroki's army was thus operating at first against defensive works, and the steadfast manner in which these obstructions were attacked and overcome fully sustained the brilliant reputation achieved by Kuroki's splendid troops at the Yalu and Liao-yang.

The first serious impression made by Kuroki upon the opposing wall of Russian defences was made on February 27th by the capture of the Wang-fu Pass. Kuroki had had assigned to him a strong artillery reinforcement in addition to his own divisional guns and the artillery of an independent brigade. The new arrivals consisted of the mountain guns of another division, four 15-centimètre howitzers, four 12-centimètre cannon, and eighteen 9-centimètre howitzers. Under the direction of Colonel Matsumoto the whole of the guns now at Kuroki's disposal bombarded the enemy's positions to the immediate front throughout the 26th and 27th, with the object of distracting attention as much as possible from the Wang-fu-ling. Meanwhile Kuroki's centre division had worked forward in the teeth of a heavy rifle and machine-gun fire, and on the morning of the 27th it reached the Wang-fu Pass with a loss of nearly one-third of its strength.

On March 1st the Kau-tu Pass was similarly captured. There are no very authentic details available of the fighting in these two passes, but there is ample evidence to show that the struggle in each case was of the severest possible character, and that the carnage was terrible on both sides. According to one account the casualties in the Kau-tu Pass—in some despatches called the Gaotu-ling—were especially dreadful. "Once a detachment of Japanese saw an opening between two Russian forces. They dashed forward to occupy the pass and ran into the full blaze of a hidden park of seventy guns. At the mouth of the Kau-tu-ling the Japanese left the corpses of thirty officers and 2,000 men. In one fight the Japanese were driven back and caught in their own wire entanglements, like rats in a trap, where they were killed by the charging Russians."

At the close of the second phase Kuroki's centre had made considerable progress. His left division had been not quite so actively employed, as will presently be seen, in co-operation with Nozu. His right division had found the task of working into touch with Kawamura's left one of considerable difficulty owing to the nature of the ground and the enemy's strength, and was now temporarily checked. It was in vain, writes a correspondent with Kuroki's army, that the enemy's position was reconnoitred for dead spaces on the steep slopes. "Kuroki was ready to go on with the attack, but Oyama did not yet consider the sacrifices that this would entail would be warranted."

Before leaving the closely associated operations in the eastern and east central sectors, it is well to emphasise a fact to which the *Times* correspondent just quoted draws attention, namely, that

both the army of the Yalu and Kuroki's army had found the Russian left to be stronger than had been anticipated. Moreover, Kuropatkin had screened his position with such care that the Japanese had to feel their way as they went, reconnaissance being out of the question, and maps by no means plentiful. It is stated as a fact that the only detailed topographical maps which the Japanese possessed of the region round Mukden were those captured from the Russians, and this statement is borne out by the circumstance that maps were specially reported to be among the spoils captured by Kawamura's left column at Chin-ho-cheng.

We have now to turn our attention to the central sector, where Nozu with his own two divisions, assisted, as necessity arose, by Kuroki's left division, and two divisions from Oku's army, faced the strongest section of the Russian winter works. On Nozu's command devolved the business of containing the enemy's centre so closely that the Russians would be compelled to retain there a very considerable force for fear lest at any moment they might be overwhelmed by a sudden charge. Looking some distance ahead, it is clear that Oyama reckoned on holding the Russians assembled here until the cusps of the crescent mentioned at the conclusion of Chapter LXXXVIII. could close in, when the enemy's huddled centre would have to surrender or be cut in pieces.

The containing process consisted at first of keeping the Japanese infantry thrown well forward while over their heads the artillery, stiffened by the big siege guns brought up from Port Arthur, sent tons of steel crashing into the enemy's lines. The position of the infantry in these circumstances, despite the "comforting thunders" of the guns behind them, was rather exhausting. They "must patiently lie on the cold ground under fire day by day. In most instances they might not even rise to a sitting posture to warm themselves by flapping their arms without being made the target for a dozen rifles. . . . In some places where they had advanced from their own works Nozu's soldiers were within a few yards of the enemy; or, again, they were able to use the other side of his trench for protection."

During the whole of the first phase the army of Nozu had displayed no special activity. Then suddenly, on the morning of the 27th—we quote the Tokio correspondent of the *Times*, who gives the only complete and coherent account of the work done in the central sector during this stage—Nogi's army, together with Kuroki's left division, "opened a furious cannonade all along their front. A powerful park of artillery, including many guns of position, had been quietly assembled, and, whereas all through the winter months ineffectual but frequent gun practice on the Russian side had been answered by Japanese silence, there now burst from the Japanese trenches a furious hail of projectiles. The Russians, supposing this to be the prelude of a general attack, rapidly massed 300 guns to reply, and throughout the afternoon of the 27th a tremendous artillery duel raged. It continued during the two following days. The Japanese did not suffer severely, but they had the satisfaction of putting many of the enemy's guns out of action, and of witnessing the piecemeal destruction of his fortifications.

"On the third day (March 1) the Russians reinforced their park with fifteen batteries of field-pieces and four batteries of heavy guns, but the weight of fire was

SECOND PHASE: FEBRUARY 27TH TO MARCH 1ST.

Kawamura reaches Ma-chun-'un and Tita, and commences to attack both. Kuroki continues attack on eastern flank of Sha-ho defences, and his right drives the enemy out of Wang-fu and Kau tu Passes. Nozu engages in three days' artillery duel with Bilderling. Oku advances between the Sha-ho and the Hun, and drives the Russians beyond Chang-tan. Nogi, having crossed the Hun on February 27th, passes round the Russian right, and on March 1st reaches Sin-min-ting.

still on the Japanese side. During the first night after the opening of the fire the Russians made a gallant, but strangely inadequate, attempt against the left army in the central sector. After a concentrated artillery fire, eight companies of infantry moved down each side of the railway an hour before midnight, and forced their way into the trenches of a Japanese outpost, where a fierce hand-to-hand encounter took place. The men of the outpost held their ground with dogged tenacity, and, being reinforced, drove out their assailants after a three hours' com-



JAPANESE INFANTRY CROSSING A RIVER UNDER FIRE.

bat. The Russians left sixty dead. Their casualties must therefore have amounted to some 25 per cent. of their total strength. They claimed a victory, but on what grounds the claim could be based it is difficult to discover. This incident, though exceptionally resolute in character, accorded with the general course of events during the preceding months. Futile cannonading and petty frivolous attacks had been typical of the Russian game of war. It seemed as though activity, however ineffectual, was a necessity to the soldiers of the Tsar."

With Kawamura's two columns hung up before Ma-chun-tun and Tita; with Kuroki's centre still fighting in the passes and his right temporarily checked; and with Nozu chiefly engaged in playing at long bowls, we have not hitherto seen much forward movement during the second phase of the Battle of Mukden. But of this we shall now find plenty in the west central and western sectors, where Oku and Nogi were about to take a hand in the proceedings.

As to Oku's strength there is some uncertainty. According to the *Times* correspondent at Tokio he had four divisions, of which, as we know, two were told off to co-operate with Nozu. But the *Times* correspondent with the First Japanese Army, writing from Mukden in April, says that Oku's own subsequent work was performed with one division and all the reserves at Oyama's command. The explanation of the apparent discrepancy may be that the reserves were organised for this purpose as a separate division, a proceeding which might be possible in an army organised on such a perfectly elastic system as that of Japan. It may be mentioned in passing that the quality of these reserves is described as superb. They had mostly been in civil life for periods varying from six to twelve years, but any small deficiency in training was amply compensated by their sagacity and true patriotic devotion.

The Russians, as already noted in Chapter LXXXVIII., had reoccupied some of the positions from which they had been driven after the Battle of Hei-kou-tai, and during the first phase of the Mukden operation they kept a close watch on Oku's movements, and subjected him to a good deal of artillery fire and some small night attacks. On February 27th, apparently thinking that Oku meant mischief, the enemy brought seven field batteries and thirteen heavy guns to bear on his centre, which lay about San-de-pu. On the 28th Oku, paying no heed to these attentions, advanced between the Sha-ho and the Hun, crossing the latter with a portion of his force and driving the Russians before him beyond Chang-tan.

An interesting detail connected with this advance may be mentioned as illustrating Japanese ingenuity. Owing to the hardness of the still ice-bound soil, it would have been impossible for infantry after a successful rush to throw up hasty entrenchments in order to render their new foothold secure. Accordingly the Japanese soldiers were allowed to provide themselves with empty sandbags, and were encouraged to fill these by scraping up the thin surface of the millet fields which the sun had thawed. There were some interesting variations from this practice. Some of the men carried blocks of wood, and one took into action a Gladstone bag! This last protection, however, proved sadly ineffectual, for the poor fellow was afterwards found dead beside his portable parapet.

It must not be supposed that Oku's advance was not vigorously opposed.

On the contrary, he found that he had only exchanged the bombardment to which his former centre had been subjected for an even more galling fire from twenty-eight batteries, four of them consisting of guns of position, which had been posted by the Russians on the east bank of the Hun south of Chang-tan. For a time the advance had to be suspended, and it was only by a great effort that the force shook off a sharp counter-attack which the Russians delivered against them while they remained checked by the storm of shells. "These were Oku's men, however, men who had never been beaten, and who were proverbial for their practical faith in the *samurai's* axiom that a tired assailant should always console himself with the conviction that the assailed is equally weary."

The operations in the western sector now claim attention, and these, as has been explained, are of peculiar interest as constituting the really critical movement of the whole series. Until the end of the first phase Nogi's three divisions had been comfortably tucked away on the Japanese left, screened partly by cavalry and partly by Oku's army. But at the beginning of the second phase, that is on February 27th, the three divisions struck camp and moved away in a westerly direction until, after a thirty-mile march, they lay between the Hun and the Liao, to the south-west of the position occupied by Oku's left before he, too, commenced moving.

It is not difficult to imagine the enthusiasm with which Nogi's army set out upon this fresh enterprise. The Japanese are taught to conceal their emotions in regard to many grave matters upon which Western peoples "let themselves go" very freely, but they are sentimental to the core, and the despatch of the assailants of Port Arthur to carry out the great decisive movement of the Battle of Mukden was a proceeding which must have appealed strongly to the sentiment of every Japanese soldier, and especially, of course, to that of the fortunate troops themselves. After such a peculiarly exhausting experience as that which they had just undergone, almost any sort of field-fighting would have been acceptable. But to be given the post of honour, to be specially told off to execute one of the most dramatic turning movements in the whole history of war—this must have been joy indeed to the survivors of those who had stormed 203 Mètre Hill, and had left thousands of their dead and wounded in the ditches and on the parapets of the great southern stronghold. One can picture the grizzled Nogi too, nursing sad memories of his two gallant sons lost before Port Arthur, but still proud and happy to have this fresh proof of Imperial confidence, this superb testimony to his unimpaired vigour and persistence.

By no means free from serious risks was the enterprise upon which the former army of Port Arthur was now engaged. For the moment it was still secure from chance of attack, unless the Russians about Chang-tan should find it possible to hurl back Oku in confusion—an improbable contingency. For the next day or two Oku's advance should continue to screen Nogi's movements, more especially if the latter were conducted with secrecy and speed. But very shortly a stage would be reached when a sudden Russian attack in force might find the three divisions, if not unprepared, at least awkwardly placed in an open country in which their guns and



FOR THE TSAR! RUSSIAN SUFFERING IN THE BATTLEFIELD.

their *impedimenta*, however carefully reduced, would be at a disadvantage. It could not yet be known that Naganuma's raid had been so radiantly successful, and that Mishtchenko's cavalry had been sent up north to guard the railway from purely imaginary peril. The possibility that flank and rear of the Japanese advance would be harried by a cloud of Cossacks led by one of the few really dashing leaders in the Russian Army, was one not to be lightly regarded, and, accordingly, Nogi's army from the first took no unnecessary risks.

From their hiding place—for it was literally that—to the west of Liao-yang the three divisions marched, still screened by cavalry, in echelon of columns from the inner flank. To the military student this, of course, is self-explanatory, but the lay reader may require to be told that "echelon" is a term derived from the French word *échelle*, a ladder, and signifies a formation of which the successive divisions are placed parallel to one another, but no two are on the same alignment, each division having its front clear of that in advance, so that by marching directly forward it can form line upon it. If one draws the outline of a few steps of a stairway, and then rubs out the perpendiculars joining the "treads," a simple diagram of an echelon is produced. By "echelon from an inner flank" is meant one in which the top tread of the stairway is on the far side from the enemy. In the case of Nogi's advance it meant that his left wing was considerably in advance. The advantage of an echelon formation in such a case ought now to be obvious. If the Russians were to attack at any point it would be far easier for the divisions not directly assailed to wheel round and come into effective action than if the whole force were marching in one long line—which is seldom possible—or in one long column.

Nogi's men on February 28th added another twenty-five miles to the thirty compiled on the previous day, and on March 1st the cavalry van reached Sin-min-ting (or Hsin-min-tun), thirty-three miles west of Mukden, to which frequent previous allusion has been made in connection with the contraband importation of supplies for Mukden by means of the Chinese railway.

It is a splendid compliment to the swiftness and secrecy with which Nogi's army had been set in motion that the Japanese cavalry who appeared at Sin-min-ting on the afternoon of March 1st should have been regarded merely as raiders in search of contraband, and it is an interesting fact that the delusion, even at this stage, should have been carefully encouraged. The detachment which entered the place consisted of 400 troopers and one gun, and, instead of merely acting as the advanced guard of a large force, they behaved just as they might have done if engaged on a disconnected raid. The Japanese quickly cleared the streets of the Chinese, but did not molest the numerous Greek and German traders, although it was evident that some of the latter were interested in the laden carts which were waiting to make the night trip to Mukden.

The business of the mock raid being concluded, the Japanese withdrew some little distance from the town, the inhabitants of which remained blissfully unaware that there was now within a few miles a complete army of three divisions swinging along in splendid fettle, and eager to make Sin-min-ting the turning-point for a direct advance against the western defences of Mukden itself.

CHAPTER XCI.

BATTLE OF MUKDEN (*CONTINUED*)—THIRD PHASE—KAWAMURA STILL CHECKED—KUROKI AND NOZU HALTED—RUSSIANS SHOW SIGNS OF WEAKENING—OKU'S HARD STRUGGLE—JAPANESE OFFICER'S REMARKABLE LETTER—NOGI PREPARES TO CLOSE.

THE third phase of the battle of Mukden may be said to have commenced on March 2nd, and to have ended at nightfall on March 7th. It was essentially a transitional stage, marked by no violent developments, and terminating, in the case of three out of the five Japanese armies engaged, in deliberate halts preceding the accomplishment of the prearranged plan in the remaining two sectors. But it was none the less a period in which distinct progress was achieved, and the latter portion of it saw the "beginning of the end" defined with remarkable distinctness.

In the case of Kawamura's army alone no advance on the position reached on February 28th is to be recorded. Throughout the whole of this phase the army of the Yalu, with its associated division from Nogi's force, continued attacking Ma-chun-tun and Tita, but without making any serious impression on either. There are repeated allusions in the Japanese despatches to the stubborn resistance offered by the enemy "behind multiple lines of fortification" in the Shin-king district, and on March 6th it is stated that the Russians made several counter-attacks from Tita, which were, however, repulsed. On the same afternoon and evening the Japanese occupied the highlands two miles south and six miles south-east of Ma-chun-tun, but the enemy were still full of fight, and their main positions were still to all intents and purposes intact, notwithstanding the desperate attempts of Kawamura's gallant fellows to break down these formidable barriers to their advance along the Fu-shun road. Happily the men were of the finest type of Japanese soldiers, well-trained and seasoned, and they are said to have borne without flinching the terrible hardships inseparable from these repeated attacks in the face of frequent snowstorms against a succession of strongholds.

Kuroki's army in the east central sector found plenty to do after the capture of the Wang-fu and Kau-tu passes, since the highlands to the west, more particularly those round Wai-tau-shan, about a dozen miles to the south-west of Wang-fu-ling, still harboured a large force of Russians bent on checking any forward movement. Most of Kuroki's work during the third phase was done in this quarter, and trying work it was. But on March 4th he had progressed sufficiently to be able to detach a strong column for the purpose of getting into touch with Kawamura and assisting the latter's left column in the attack on Ma-chun-tun.

On March 5th, 6th, and 7th, Kuroki was chiefly engaged in watching his front intently in order to detect the first sign of any weakening. He was aware, of course, of what was being done by Nogi, and knew that in all probability the accomplishment of the turning movement

would result in a break up of the opposition to his own immediate front. On the 7th the eagerly looked-for development occurred. Kuroki was actually writing out an order to one of his generals to attack when news was brought to them that some of the Russian trenches had been evacuated, and that elsewhere there were indications of a withdrawal. The leader of the First Army of Japan calmly altered the word "attack" in his order to "pursue," and himself prepared to send the whole of the force under his command in a glorious advance first to the banks of the Hun, and afterwards to a level with Mukden and far beyond.

Meanwhile Nozu in the central sector had followed up his tremendous cannonade of February 27th and 28th and March 1st with a series of attacks on a number of outworks in which the Russians had established themselves a little to the south of the Sha-ho in the region of the enclave in which Putiloff Hill was situated. The enemy were not finally pushed out of these until March 6th, and then Nozu rested for a few hours, awaiting, like Kuroki, the turn of affairs on the extreme right and left. On March 7th he received from Kuroki a message asking him if there were any signs of weakening on the centre army's front. Nozu investigated, with the result that his soldiers were soon in the trenches which they had faced all winter. Limbs numb with cold might at last stretch themselves; minds numb with long waiting under the torture of steady fire at last had the relief of action. For Nozu, as for Kuroki, March 7th saw the word "attack" deleted and "pursuit" written in its stead.

Of the operations of Oku after crossing the Hun the *Times* correspondent gives a splendid description, nearly the whole of which must be borrowed *verbatim*, since any attempt to paraphrase it would deprive it of much of its vigour and picturesqueness. The writer quoted commences by describing the dead levels of the interval between the Hun and the Liao, on which Oku was now operating:—

"The even, drab, drear, earth-coloured vista of the plain is broken only by the villages of the peasant farmers and the trees in their gardens or some small pine-grove shading ancestral tombs. Brigandage will not permit the people to live in isolation. Except for the collection of mud houses, surrounding a temple of brick, a mile or more apart, no cover other than ruts or ditches is available. The villages formed strategic points, which became the centre of coagulations of strife. Making the whole like the squares of a checker-board, the houses are set in stone or mud-walled compounds, which are excellent protection from rifle fire."

Of the actual fighting here is a luridly graphic picture:—

"Once a Russian line began working its way forward at one end of a village and a Japanese line at the other—there was a bloody game of hide and seek. Warfare reverted to a primeval scrimmage where brute bravery and fox-like cunning on the part of individuals or groups won the day. Both sides avoided the open thoroughfares as they would a live electric wire. The antagonists hugged the street walls as they crept forward, or broke through the walls of houses in order to get into the next compound, where Russian fired and lunged and fired at Japanese, and Japanese fired and lunged at Russian. As for that much-discussed weapon, the bayonet, it was used as freely as the pike in the days of Cromwell.

English Miles.

Russian Infantry, Cavalry

Japanese " "

Names of Commanders thus OKU.

Main Roads. ---- Other Roads.

Railways.

THIRD PHASE: MARCH 2ND TO MARCH 7TH.

Kawamura, with the help of a column detached by Kuroki, continues attack on Man-chun-tun and Tita. Kuroki having forced the passes on his right and established touch with Kawamura, and having with his left and centre carried the left flank of the Sha-ho entrenchments, halts in readiness for the combined advance. Nozu pushes back Bilderling, and halts. Oku, checked by Russian entrenchments, sits down to contain Kaulbars. Nogi moves eastward on Mukden, his right, on March 4th, coming into touch with Oku's left at Li-kwan-pau. Russian retreat commences on night of March 7th.

"While in the same situation two European foes, clad in khaki, could scarcely have told friend from foe, here the difference of race allowed for instant distinction of whether the man you met coming around a corner was on your side or the other. The hand grenade, thrown from a stick as a boy tosses an apple which he has impaled, played a ghastly and important part.

"It was in one of these typical villages of the plain—Li-kom-pu—that in the final desperate attempt to break through between Oku and Nogi, one Japanese brigade, completely surrounded, never thought of surrender, and on the rock of its stubborn courage the Russian assault finally battered itself to pieces. Like Kuroki's battalions at Wai-tau-shan and Ti-ti-san, these men had been told to stand until the last was killed. For them the test came; and they stood. The 34th Regiment of Oku's army was decimated in the attack on Chusampo, the central position before Liao-yang. In the Battle of Mukden the 33rd Regiment was practically annihilated. One who went over the field immediately after



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RISKY WORK FOR THE JAPANESE IN AN INTERVAL BETWEEN SKIRMISHES. DIGGING UP UNEXPLODED MINES.

The kettle-like contrivance is really a submarine mine, but thousands had been buried in the earth outside Mukden. The shell-shaped case is brass filled with gun-cotton.

the action told me that at Li-kom-pu the bodies were as thick among the ruins, which shell-fire had wrought of the town, as if the breath of a volcano had suffocated the crowds at a fair. Many were literally torn to pieces by the hand-grenades, which the Russians had used as freely as the Japanese. By such sacrifices as this, and the use of all the reserves of the army as a whole which had been concentrated on the railway, Oku was able to fulfil the part assigned to him."

After overriding Chang-tan Oku's force surged on, reaching Wu-kiatzu and Chou-kwan-pau on March 2nd, and, later, capturing a large quantity of arms and ammunition at Su-hu-pau. On the 4th Oku was occupying a curved line to the south-west and south of Mukden, his left lying on Li-kwan-pau. At this point we are fortunate in being able to quote freely from a remarkable letter written by a Japanese officer, Lieutenant Tokutaro Oshio, to his brother in England, a translation of which appeared in the *Times* of July 13th. It is not stated to which army the writer belonged, but internal evidence points to his having been with the reserves under Oku. Lieutenant Tokutaro Oshio's description of the fortifications with which Oku's army found itself from time to time confronted, and of the tremendous struggle which took place in front of them, is a notable contribution to our knowledge of the war, and enables us to realise the actual scene with singular clearness:—

"Here, as usual, the Russians held a position of great natural strength, supplemented with every device known to the modern military engineer, and the Russian engineers are splendid. Barbed wire entanglements, abattis, pits, all complete, and all that could be seen were the muzzles of the rifles out of the solid masonry of the walls. We advanced very slowly, step by step, through the shower of bullets, rifles and Maxims making a continuous sing-song like the singing of a thousand thrushes. Now a man on my right goes down, now one on my left, then a fellow is blown to pieces before one's eyes, his flesh is scattered, and some of it comes upon one's face. Voice of an officer encouraging some wounded men, or orders given in a hoarse undertone, or a *Banzai* for our Emperor—the last breath of a dying man—all these blended together in the din of battle rush through one's ears until one might think it all a nightmare but for the evidence of one's eyes. After the day's exertion the place remained in the enemy's hands. We had our colonel wounded, and many others placed *hors de combat;* then, when these things were known to the men their determination and fierce indignation reached the highest pitch. They said that they would not leave the field of battle dead or alive or to go into hospital until the colours of the regiment floated above the Russian works. In the night the colonel called together the officers and said we must take the position at all costs, or we fail in our duty towards the comrades of other sections. If unsuccessful, there is only one thing for us to do—die. 'Gentlemen, we will attack the enemy now, and I ask you to leave your bones on this field of battle with me.' We in one breath called out, '*Banzai!* let us do or die.' Orders were given out at once: 'Anyone firing without orders shall be courtmartialled.' 'Use your bayonet.' 'Officers will look for the enemy's leaders.' 'Do not expect to return alive,' and so on, and so on.

"At 2 a.m. the attack began. At 300

metres we stopped and made the final dispositions, then approached within 100 metres of the Russian lines. The enemy poured shot and shell from every available rifle and Maxim and light field gun. Though the night was dark, the distance was short, and at this point the enemy's fire began to tell terribly. A man turned over, letting go one hand from his rifle, so I kicked him gently on the shoulder to see if he had fallen asleep—he was dead. I heard a gnashing of teeth behind me—a poor fellow was discharging blood from his mouth. Yet not a sound, not a cry of pain, not even a muttered moan. They remembered their orders. Reaching a point where we were just able to see the abattis, we charged with an earth-quaking hurrah, and we rushed it. We—some few dozen of us—entered the defence from the enemy's right flank. Here there were no entanglements nor abattis. I jumped over the trench and over the breastwork into the interior. A few of the enemy's look-out men were there, but I threw them down into a ditch with my hands. I had not had my sword drawn yet. . . .

"I was just turning round a corner of a heap of kaoliang stalks, shouting, 'Come on, fellows, come on!' when someone ran straight into me, almost throwing me into the stack. He is a six-footer, so he is no Japanese. I give him a straight cut with the flat of my sword, and call upon him to disarm; then tell him to hide himself till the fight is over, and then come out and surrender. Well, he did it. Already I could make out such Japanese words from the direction of the front as '*Banzai, banzai!* You Russki, surrender, surrender, or you look out.' As the overwhelming number of frightened Russians began to stream towards the spot where we few were lying in wait, we had no choice but wield our cold steel as best we could. After this it was all single combats, a savage warfare. You crouch on the ground, and as a Russian approaches you swiftly despatch him, and throwing yourself down upon the ground again wait for another to come on. 'Yamada, Yamada, Oka, Oka, now be careful.' 'Don't confound friend with foe!' 'There they come, there they come. Steady, steady! *Banzai, banzai!*' In half an hour it was all over, though it appeared half a lifetime."

In this affair the Japanese casualties were slight, but among the wounded were the colonel, two lieutenants, and four second-lieutenants; and two second-lieutenants, one sergeant-major, and one quartermaster-sergeant were killed. The sergeant-major killed was in civil life the vice-head of one of the best and largest public schools in Japan.

Here is a picturesque passage describing one of the Japanese rushes at the close of a hard day's fighting:—

"Towards night it began to snow, and the effect was truly beautiful. It was a tableau, a scene from a stage. In the silvery white background, with here and there a red conflagration, marched the men of the 2nd Regiment, men in khaki, their knapsacks packed, their greatcoats flung away, with the badge of white round their arms, officers in front with drawn swords, the bluish white gleam of bayonets clearly discernible in the snow; straight and steady charged the men of Japan. The reflection of the red flickers of fire played upon the drifting snow and upon the spray kicked up by the tramping of feet of the marching host. Shells shrieked, thumped, and exploded with an awful splendour never before realised. The pity that real blood should flow and real living bodies of men be scattered to

the winds! Before this determined attack of the Japanese the Russians faltered and broke. The 5th Company of the 2nd had a previous order, so, doubling, and at our fastest pace, beyond the regulation limit, we reached a position along the line of the enemy's retreat. I shall always be trying to efface the scene from my memory, but I shall never be able to do so. When I gave the word, every rifle in the company spoke at twenty metres distance. It was a harrowing scene. Under the steady sectional fire the men went down in heaps, and the fleeing Russians actually walked, or rather raced, along their dead and dying comrades."

On March 6th occurred what the Japanese Lieutenant Tokutaro Oshio describes as "the hottest and worst, bloodiest, and most savage of the whole series of Mukden battles." This was fought about four miles west of Mukden Station, the Russians holding strongly a line between Mukden and a place called Gyorimho, in and about which the Japanese were established:—

"The doggedness of that Russian defence! Heavy guns and light guns, handy mountain guns, and little dynamite guns, all joined in the bombardment of their positions, while the heroic Russian gunners replied shot for shot and shell for shell. Attacks and counter-attacks succeeded each other like the figures on a fairy lantern. We fought with rifles, we fought with bayonets, then with grenades, and with shovels and picks, and even with fists. Why, it's no more nor less than a gigantic street brawl. One of the battalion commanders



A TERRIBLE GLEANING.
Russian dead collected after the Battle of Mukden.



was killed and the colonel wounded severely, and one after another the company officers went down. Once when I whistled to the buglers and the charge was sounded, just barely forty out of a battalion of skirmishers leaped to their feet, and the rest remained still—no cowards, but dead men—dead at their posts. Those who responded to the call had no right to do so; they ought to have been in the ambulances. That day's doings could never be told vividly enough with my pen, and, perhaps, no words could ever do justice to the bravery of the men, Russian and Japanese, and the hardships they endured. The Russians, five or six times our number, charged time after time so resolutely up to our positions that some of the men actually passed through the first line—but they never returned. These are the fresh troops from the reserves—determined, because of the knowledge that on their action hangs the fate of Kuropatkin and his army. So that day success remained with the Russians, in spite of all our efforts. Well, they deserved it."

At nightfall Lieutenant Tokutaro Oshio and some comrades volunteered to rush the works with a *kesshitai*—the meaning of this word, a band of men "prepared to die," was previously explained in connection with Naganuma's raid—and when it got about that this offer had been made the whole force seems to have gone mad with warlike enthusiasm.

"Men came to their officers and begged to let them go and fill up the trenches with their corpses, so that others following them might walk over their bodies into the defences. At the men's earnest request a deputation of officers and men were sent to the divisional commander, who gave them the requested permission, not without some hesitation. All the unwounded of our company offered themselves to a man, and formed up—in fact, they all offered themselves; but we were compelled to take only the unwounded. The men of the *kesshitai* formed up in a square, each man with a tumbler of water, to drink to the long parting—a parting after which they might never meet again. General Tachimi uncorked some wine, and himself poured just a drop into each man's glass, shaking hands with each. Holding his glass aloft, he said: 'Gentlemen, I have not much to say to you tonight. You know well the desperate nature of your undertaking, in which success is not certain. You know also the chances against your returning alive to tell the tale. I can only wish you, gentlemen, God-speed. Go, gentlemen, do your best. I do not command it of you, comrades, but only cherish the hope that your resolution and your determination may bear the fruit of success. Farewell, farewell. Long live the Emperor! Long live the Emperor! Long live the Emperor!'"

What follows shows the spirit of the Japanese reserves:—

"Men we were to leave behind came and pitifully implored me to take them, but, on my refusal, begged me to do their share of the work. Oh! our glorious army of citizen soldiers, men pursuing some peaceful avocation in some obscure corner of Japan, living and dying unknown, never doing harm to a living creature, contented and happy to be a simple peasant or an artisan in the piping times of peace, and yet they are heroes all, every one of them! It is an overwhelming honour, and a responsibility almost too great, to lead men such

as these to dangers and destruction, men to whom in age I am but a younger brother, and in point of experience a mere child. 'I have got seven yen in my bag, Honda; take it out when I am gone, and send it up to the war fund office, will you?' 'Now, these are my last verses; keep them for my sake Oka!' 'Good-bye, Tori, meet you at Shokonsha' (the shrine of those fallen for the nation and country). These are bits of sentences I catch as I pace to and fro in the front waiting for the signal to advance. It made me think. I have seen nearly all the important actions since the war began, yet I am here still, and about to lead my trusted and tried heroes to almost certain annihilation. Perhaps this time to-morrow I shall be no more. I wanted to do so much. Has the time come to pay the blood-tax? Well, there will be many more worthy sons of the country, so I shall face it without regrets, happy in the thought of dying for the nation and for the country, and for our Imperial Master.

"At midnight men threw off the great winter coats, and white distinguishing bands were put on the left sleeves in readiness to move. With drawn swords the officers lead, with fixed bayonets the men follow, in our usual formation. First grenade-men in a line at certain intervals, then the main body in column of sixes, with a grenade-man at every few paces in the ranks. And with a tremendous yell we stormed into the earthwork. What followed I cannot bear to recite. How many of us returned? A few, a very few. And the works? Intact still? As we receded came the enemy's counter-attack—the officer in command of this section knows his business well. But there is nothing so ridiculously easy as to repel a Russian counter-attack."

On March 7th there was more of this bitter fighting, but towards the end of the day there was the same indication of weakening which had been noticed by Nozu and Kuroki, and at nightfall Oku was in readiness similarly to take prompt advantage of the enemy's withdrawal. But the end of the third phase has now been reached, and we must leave Oku's splendid fellows still "containing" Kaulbars and pass to the continued progress of Nogi on the north-west and north.

Nogi's army, having reached Sin-min-ting, swung round, and on March 4th its right was in touch with Oku's left at Lik-wan-pau, the line extending northwards through Ta-shi-chiao. During the next two days part of Nogi's army assisted that of Oku in the desperate attacks against the Russian position to the south-west of Mukden, his left being gradually extended still further to the north. On the 6th the Russians, now fully alive to the situation, sent a division with seventy guns to drive a wedge into Nogi's line, but the attempt was easily frustrated. On the 7th Nogi's right was still at Lik-wan-pau, but his line had a frontal deployment extending fifteen miles to the north, and all was ready for the final advance, which was to decide the issue of, in some respects, the greatest battle in the world's history.



Photo: Bulla.

RUSSIAN FIELD GUNS IN ACTION AT THE BATTLE OF MUKDEN.

CHAPTER XCII.

BATTLE OF MUKDEN (*CONTINUED*)—FOURTH PHASE—CAPTURE OF MA-CHUN-TUN AND TITA—FU-SHUN OCCUPIED—NOZU TO THE FORE—THE BATTLE WON—STRIKING DETAILS—AN INCOMPLETE VICTORY.

AT the close of the third phase of the great Mukden Battle—that is to say, on the night of March 7th—the Army of the Yalu under Kawamura, in the eastern sector of the area of operations, was still "hung up" before Ma-chun-tun and Tita. In the east central sector, however, Kuroki, having noted signs of weakness in the Russian resistance to his immediate front, had prepared to push forward, with the result that from midnight of the 7th he was able to co-operate in an increasing degree with Kawamura's left. The effect of this additional pressure on Liniévitch was soon apparent. On the morning of March 8th attacks in force were delivered by the Japanese against Ma-chun-tun and Tita, and, after a week's desperate resistance, the former succumbed on that day, and before evening the Russian garrison were in full retreat in the direction of Fu-shun, with the Japanese pressing on their heels. Tita held out a little longer, and it was not until 3 a.m. on the 9th that the defenders broke and fled northward. Even then they might, perhaps, have attempted to prolong their gallant resistance but for the fact that the whole of the Russian force had now commenced to fall back, as the result of Kuropatkin's realisation of his position.

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40

English Miles.

Russian Infantry and Cavalry

Japanese

Names of Commanders, thus. OKU.

Main Roads. Other Roads

Railways Light Railways.

FOURTH PHASE: MARCH 8TH TO MARCH 10TH.

Kawamura with Kuroki's assistance captures Ma-chun-tun (March 8th) and Tita (March 9th), and later carries Fu-shun (March 10th), and sweeps Russian left from hills to the north. Nozu having pursued the enemy to south of Mukden, moves westward in order to assist Nogi to intercept Russians flying from Oku. Oku having broken through Russian entrenchments, pursues. Nogi carries positions west and north-west of Mukden, and wrecks railway north of Mukden. Japanese occupy Mukden on March 10th.

By this time the Russian Commander-in-Chief was beginning clearly to understand the nature of the Japanese strategy, and already he had moved back the reserves which in the early days of the battle he had hurried to meet what he supposed to be a critical movement against his left flank. With such real danger impending in the west, and a growing chance that the line of retreat to the north might be cut, it was necessary not only to strengthen the opposition to Nogi and Oku on the right, but also to pull in the left a little in preparation for a general withdrawal. Hence the sudden evacuation of the trenches in front of Kuroki; hence, to some extent, the accelerated retirement from Ma-chun-tun and Tita, the seven days' stubborn defence of which against such a large and determined force of assailants must always rank as a very meritorious performance. Indeed the calm and resolute manner in which Liniévitch held both Kuroki and Kawamura during the first three phases of the Battle of Mukden both helps to defend the Russian conduct of the fighting from the charge of utter ineptitude, and enhances the credit due to the Japanese for carrying out their plan in the main successfully, notwithstanding the grave obstacle here encountered.

With Ma-chun-tun and Tita finally disposed of, the way to Fu-shun lay fairly clear before the armies of Kawamura and Kuroki, and right vigorously they took up the advance. Incidentally, it may be noted that the district into which they were about to enter was one of singular importance and interest. Fu-shun itself is but a small, walled city of no particular note, but south of it are highly productive coal-mines which, since the loss of those at Yen-tai, had been of priceless value to the Russians, who drew from them most of the coal needed for the railway service between Mukden and Harbin. These coal mines, as explained in an interesting communication from a Japanese correspondent to the *Morning Post*, appear to have been worked in pre-historic times by a race which, it is curiously conjectured, may have been the ancestors of the Japanese themselves! When the Russians first took possession of them they found traces of workings at a great depth, from which the coal had been completely and most skilfully exhausted by unknown hands at a very remote period. The suggestion is that these very early miners were the forerunners of the Yamato race now peopling Japan, and the bare possibility that this may be the case invests the advance of Kuroki and Kawamura into this region with much historical interest.

But Kuroki and Kawamura had little time or opportunity for investigating such questions, more especially as they found their progress towards Fu-shun retarded by an unexpected obstacle. As has before been indicated, the ice on the Manchurian rivers was now beginning to melt. The Russians fleeing from Ma-chun-tun and Tita, and those whom Liniévitch had withdrawn from the trenches in front of Kuroki, had crossed the Hun, and so had a portion of Kuroki's men, who also had reached the river on the 8th. But when the remainder of Kuroki's army and the whole of Kawamura's arrived at the southern bank of the Hun on the 9th, a serious embarrassment occurred. Apparently the men, or a large proportion of them, managed to get across in the nick of time, but pontoons had to be used for the guns, and it goes without saying that pontooning

where there is still a good deal of ice remaining is very much more difficult than it is in a clear stream. By dint of great exertions the passage was more or less satisfactorily accomplished, and by nightfall on the 9th Fu-shun, which lies 25 miles to the east of Mukden, and has three or four hundred houses only, was occupied without much trouble.

On the morning of the 10th an attack was delivered on an important position which the Russians had taken up in the hills to the north of Fu-shun, and from this, again, the defenders were dislodged, and sent hurrying northward along the fine military road which Kuropatkin with considerable foresight had caused to be constructed between Fu-shun and Tie-ling. By this time the Battle of Mukden was virtually ended, and accordingly at this point we may leave Kuroki and Kawamura for the present, although, inasmuch as the former's army was now dovetailed into Nozu's as well as into the Army of the Yalu, it will be necessary to keep him and his gallant fellows still to some extent on the stage.

One cannot part with Kawamura's Army at this stage without an added expression of admiration for its consistent tenacity and pushfulness in the teeth of constant and serious vexations. It is usual to expend a great deal of applause upon a force which, after a fairly long march, attains its object by coming into collision with and routing the enemy in a single sharp encounter. Surely still greater praise is due to an army which, after such a terribly fatiguing advance as that achieved by the Army of the Yalu, finds itself confronted by a strongly intrenched and powerful enemy, with whom it has to struggle hard for a long week before any impression can be made upon him. Nor must we forget that, even after Ma-chun-tun and Tita had been captured, Kawamura's Army had a heavy task to perform in the passage of the Hun and the renewed engagement of the enemy among the Fu-shun highlands. Throughout this difficult period these comparatively inexperienced troops behaved splendidly, thus adding a fifth to the tale of Japanese armies which had already covered themselves with marked and particular distinction.

Kuroki's, first of them all in the field, had won the Battle of the Yalu, and working up to Feng-hwang-cheng had taken a leading part in the trying operations among the passes between that and Liao-yang. The Army of Oku had pushed up nearly the whole length of the Liao-tung Peninsula with resistless gallantry and unvarying patience. The Army of Nozu, the former Ta-ku-shan Army, had proved its valour and adaptableness at Liao-yang. The Army of Nogi had won imperishable renown in the capture of Port Arthur. To have earned the right to be classed on equal terms with such honourable rivals was something of which Kawamura's troops may well have been proud, and we may take it that not less proud were the remainder of Oyama's gallant host to admit the Army of the Yalu to their high companionship.

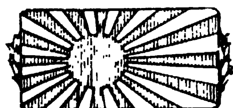
We have now to turn to the work done during the fourth phase in the central sector, where Nozu, like Kuroki, had, at the close of the third phase, commenced a forward movement. On this commander there was now to be imposed a highly responsible task. He had with him, it will be remembered, portions of both Kuroki's and Oku's armies, and, until the Russian centre weakened in sympathy with the Russian left, he had

had quite enough to do to present an impenetrable front to Bilderling. But now his *rôle* was changed, and in some respects rendered more difficult. For, while Kuroki and Kawamura to his right and Oku and Nogi to his left had definite objectives before them, he was in the position of being expected to bring his weight to bear swiftly in any direction in which it would tell to the best advantage, at the same time keeping up a steady pressure on the enemy retreating to his immediate front. The skill and vigour with which he performed this complicated duty may have been partly due to the wise promptings of Oyama and the General Staff, but much of the success attained must certainly be ascribed to his personal initiative. But for his promptitude Kuropatkin might have got away from Mukden with no greater loss of men and *moral* than was suffered at Liao-yang. To the persistence and continual self-sacrifice of Nozu's Army must be attributed no small proportion of the total results of these weeks of weary fighting, since without his assistance both Kuroki and Oku must have fallen far short of their actual achievements.

Throughout the 8th Nozu's course was plain and straightforward. He simply went ahead, and by the evening of the 9th came to the Hun, along the banks of which a sandstorm of peculiar violence was raging. A singularly grave problem now presented itself. As will be seen presently, Nogi on the extreme Japanese left had now been confronted by a large and desperate concentration of troops, which were doing their utmost to beat him back and so ensure the safe withdrawal of the remainder of the Russian Army to Tie-ling. Against this mass Nogi could not hope to make headway, and might even have to yield to their determined pressure unless the latter were relieved by a demonstration in some other quarter. The only commander able to make such a demonstration was Nozu, with such assistance as Kuroki could spare him. To Nozu, then, fell the singularly important task of threatening the railway from the east, thus for the moment reversing the parts which his army and that of Nogi had hitherto played. For it was now Nogi's turn to wait until Nozu and Kuroki's left turned in on to the railway and sped the Russian retreat to the north—since complete envelopment was out of the question. Thanks to Nozu's quickness of movement this interlude did not last long. On the night of the 9th, the Commander of the Japanese centre crossed the Hun, and on the following morning he was hitting the Russian rearguard to the south of Mukden a series of shrewd blows. Later on this, the closing day of the battle, Nozu passed to the north of Mukden, and wheeling westward, formed, with a portion of Nogi's force, the neck of a bottle through which the Russians now flying from Oku had to pass. But this belongs rather to the sequel of the battle than to the battle itself, which by this time was fairly won, not a little owing to Nozu's night advance across the Hun, and to the hint thus afforded to Kaulbars on the Russian right that at any moment he might be taken in the rear.

Incidentally it may be noted that Nozu was favoured, to some extent, not only by the fact that in the early stages of the battle he was not heavily engaged, but also by the inclusion of the flower of the Japanese Army—notably the "invincible" Sixth (Kumamoto) Division—in his command.

In the preceding chapter we left Oku at the close of the third phase still



GENERAL BARON NOGI AT HIS HEADQUARTERS WITH THE ADVANCED COLUMN IN UPPER MANCHURIA.

"containing" Kaulbars, but ready to take instant advantage of any opening in the wall of defences to his front. On the morning of March 8th the psychological moment arrived for an advance, but the latter was not to be at first by any means a triumphal progress. At 11 o'clock in the forenoon Oku, after desperate fighting, which in a few hours cost the Russians 8,000 casualties, broke through the Russian cordon and commenced the work of pursuit, the Russians resisting stubbornly for the next two days, until, on the 10th, the retreat became general. In the course of this steady advance of Oku's force the long-contested Putiloff Hill, which formed such a notable feature of the Sha-ho operations, was surrendered, and one can imagine with what a pang the Russians finally withdrew from a position immortalised in the first instance by a fine exhibition of Muscovite valour, and afterwards the famous scene of constant attacks, and a mark for much terrific bombardment.

Simultaneously with Oku's advance from Lik-wan-pau, Nogi's Port Arthur division commenced to press in upon Mukden, and position after position was hotly contested with the now desperate Russians. The Army of Kaulbars on the Russian right had been heavily reinforced, not only by Kuropatkin's reserves, but also by Rennenkampf's cavalry, which had been transferred from Liniévitch's command on the left to the north-west of Mukden, where they should have been working a week since to be of much practical use. By the 9th the opposition encountered by Nogi to the north was, as has been explained in dealing with the work of Nozu's Army, becoming serious. The Russians were not only defending, but were delivering counter attacks of the fiercest possible kind. In one of these a brigade of Nogi's command was terribly handled, and in one regiment of that brigade not a single officer was alive and unwounded. This happened on a line only some five miles long, to the immediate west and north-west of Mukden, and for the moment Nogi was powerless to make further progress. He had already sent a detachment to wreck the railway to the north of Mukden, which had done its work with completeness and despatch, but this advantage was small compared with the drawback of being held in check by a force covering Mukden itself from the Northern Mausolea (Peiling), five miles to the north, down to Ta-ping-chwang, five miles due west of the city. For, every hour that this screen remained interposed between Mukden and Nogi, thousands of Russians were withdrawing safely to Tie-ling. Moreover, it was a question whether another such attack as that which the Russians had delivered against Nogi might not force him to give way, and thus bring the carefully conceived and hitherto brilliantly executed turning movement to an inglorious and, indeed, disastrous conclusion.

But the advance of Nozu on the fateful night of the 9th brought things swiftly to the right termination for the Japanese in general, and for Nogi in particular. In a few hours the Russian defence crumbled away, and in the morning of the 10th Nogi found himself no longer exposed to the risk of a tremendous assault, no longer even checked by an obstinate resistance. The Russians to the west of Mukden had joined in the retreat to the north; Oku was now driving before him those of the enemy with whom he had been dealing in the south-west. Nozu, with one or more of Kuroki's divi-

sions, was at least level with Mukden on the east. The battle was won, and about noon Marshal Oyama was able to despatch to Tokio the following momentous telegram :—

"To-day, at 10 a.m., we occupied Mukden.

"Our enveloping movement, which has been proceeding since several days, has completely attained its object.

"Fierce engagements are now in progress at various places near Mukden.

"We have taken an exceedingly large number of prisoners and quantities of arms, ammunition, provisions, fodder, and war material, but it has been impossible yet to count them."

The same night another official report was received at Tokio to the following effect :—

"A superior force of the enemy is still resisting in the hills north of Fu-shun, where we are attacking.

"Our columns completely drove back the enemy to the north bank of the Hun, where we are now attacking and pursuing. Reports show that all the enemy's troops, numbering a very large force, in the positions between the railway and the Mukden high road, lost all formation from noon on March 10th, and in a pitiably exhausted and suffering condition streamed northward, crowding the space between the city and San-wa, which is eight miles north of Mukden. Here our artillery and infantry concentrated their fire on these masses until sunset, inflicting heavy losses.

"Meanwhile another column of ours, moving rapidly north-east from King-lung-tien, on the Sin-min-ting road, reached Pu-ho, which is about twelve miles north-east of Mukden, in the evening ; where it is intercepting and destroying the fleeing Russians."

The capture of the Russian position to the north of Fu-shun has already been anticipated in the account of Kuroki's and Kawamura's operations. It may be added that the north-easterly movement of the column from King-lung-tien on the Sin-min-ting road to Pu-ho is clearly that with which Nozu's force co-operated when, after passing Mukden, it wheeled westward and formed with Nogi's detachment a sort of eel-trap for those who were flying before Oku. The honours in this combined movement seem to have fallen to a division detached from Kuroki's Army, which seized an important pass at the cost of a thousand casualties —bringing the total of that division's losses in the battle up to about 50 per cent. of its total strength!—on its own initiative, without waiting for orders from grand headquarters. But details with reference to the cutting of the Russian line of retreat may be postponed for the present, while we return to Mukden itself and endeavour to grasp the situation produced by the course of events up to the evening of March 10th.

From some standpoints the first thing to be considered in such cases is always the list of casualties, to which the detail of spoils furnishes an interesting and less tragic appendix. In this instance it is necessary to anticipate a little, not only because by March 10th no accurate lists had been compiled, but because many of the casualties occurred, and most of the prisoners were captured, in the course of the Russian retreat. Also, as will be seen, even the ultimate estimates of the losses on both sides are not mathematically satisfactory. For example, the Russian official statement issued quite at the end of March gives the total Russian losses at Mukden as between 80,000 and 90,000. Yet on March 12th a Japanese

official report dealing only with the armies in the Sha-ho, gave the following approximate figures, which were still increasing: Prisoners, over 40,000; Russian corpses in the field, 26,500; other Russian casualties, 90,000. On March 13th a Japanese official estimate of the Russian casualties in the Shin-king quarter gave a total of 20,000 as the probable figure, 1,200 dead being left on the field, but only 80 prisoners being captured. A French estimate places the number of Russians killed or placed *hors de combat* at 175,000, and taking one account with another we shall probably not be far wrong if we assume that the number of killed was about 30,000, of wounded about 100,000, and of prisoners between 40,000 and 50,000.

The Japanese official estimate of their own losses may be freely accepted as accurate, but it is not, unfortunately, either detailed or quite complete. It simply states that the total casualties in all the Japanese armies from February 6th to the morning of March 12th were 41,222. It will be remembered that there was some stiff fighting for a few days prior to February 26th, but it is possible that the killed and wounded during this preliminary period did not amount to more than a few hundreds.

As to spoils, immense quantities of ammunition, railway material, and stores were captured, but there is some question as to the number of guns. From the Sha-ho quarter 60 guns and 60,000 rifles were reported to have been taken up to March 12th, and in the Shin-king quarter 6 machine guns and 2,200 rifles. Yet a correspondent of the *Times*, writing from St. Petersburg on March 12th, states that official despatches had recorded the loss of nearly 500 guns.

The actual occupation of Mukden took place, as we have seen, at 10 a.m. on the morning of March 10th. But there was still a good deal of desultory fighting going on, especially to the west of the city, and for a vivid account of this we

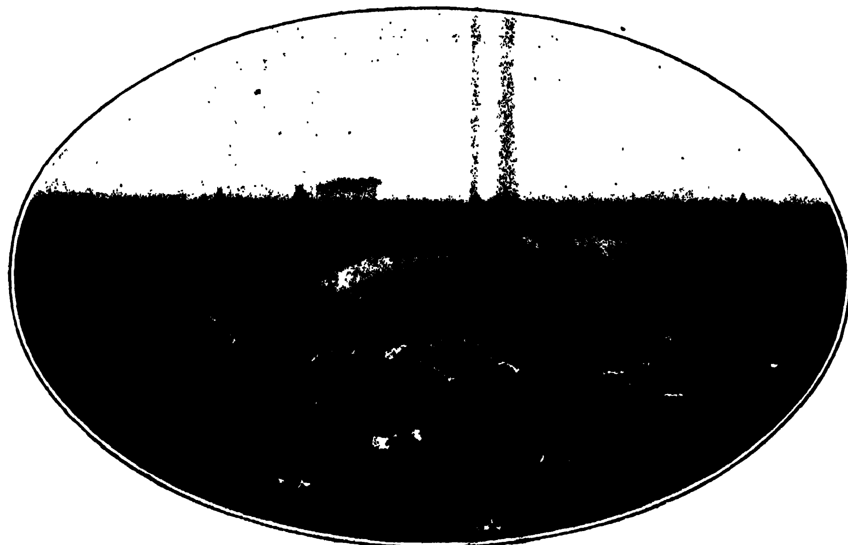


Photo: T. Ruddiman Johnston, Tokio.
A RUSSIAN TRENCH OUTSIDE MUKDEN RAILWAY STATION.



Photo: Bulla.
RUSSIAN INFANTRY BATTALION ADVANCING TO THE ATTACK AT THE BATTLE OF MUKDEN.

may again refer to the letter of the Japanese officer quoted in the preceding chapter.

"The 10th was the happiest day of the Battle of Mukden. After half a day's desultory firing and leisurely fighting our battalion received an order to take Tahoshitu, which the enemy held in force. In this my company formed the first line. I talk of battalions and companies, but a battalion, particularly ours, at this stage furnished about as many men as a company. We moved through a hail of rifle and machine-gun bullets, which now began to resemble some perfectly natural phenomenon, as of sunshine or rain, and it was mere child's play compared with the experiences of that awful night on the 6th. We lost a few before coming within 200 metres of the Russian first line of trenches. As I leapt on my feet and stepped out to the front the men closed up behind (we give no word of command, they watch their officers), and elbow to elbow we charged. As I entered the village about 20 paces in front of the wall of bayonets, I caught sight of the Russians running helter-skelter out at the other end of the village high street. Ten men were unable to get away, among them a one-year volunteer. These men came up to me, and saluting, spoke to me in Chinese. 'Toshei, toshei (thanks, thanks).' Then, fetching out lump sugar, vodka, etc., with 'Sinku, sinku; well done, sir, well done.' The humour of it!"

At Tahoshitu the reserve came up and the detachment marched to the Mukden station. Lieutenant Tokutaro Oshio thus describes his impressions:—

"To Japanese bred and born on the top of a mountain, cramped up between the Sea of Japan and the Pacific, the Manchurian plain, where, as the Chinese have it, 'one sees for 1,000 miles,' seems vast and desolate, but magnificent, and makes one feel as if oneself were expanding. Upon this vast, magnificent plain moved countless shapes of undefinable masses. Some move this way and others that, with momentary pauses and occasional delays, moving backwards sometimes, but never for long. The broad line of the direction of these movements may be given as toward the City of the Dragon Throne. Some of these bodies had the appearance of a dark, evil-looking snake, or of a dragon winding its tortuous way to its place of refuge, and vomiting fire and smoke. At closer quarters this dissolves into a brigade of infantry on the march, with its regiment of skirmishers. Further away yonder is a huge grey-coloured mass, irregular in shape, neither square nor round, but rather like the shape of a jelly-fish, for it is elastic, and closes and uncloses and varies between the two shapes. As a heavy shell from a gun, lately their own, now in the hands of the victorious Japanese, plumps straight down into the centre of the mass, scattering its death-dealing charge all round, this mass opens out in a hurried movement, to close up again in a semblance of a square under the relentless patter of our Meiji imps. Bang! it opens. Clang, clang, clang of machine guns, and pit-pat, pit-pat of rifles; it closes up again. Each time it closes one notices that its size shrinks. That is the Russian rearguard."

The Russian column breaks and runs, the men firing as they flee. At 7 p.m. the Japanese enter the Mukden Station, which the Russians must indeed have been in a hurry to leave:—

"Behind them they left quantities of whisky, brandy, champagne, burgundy, vodka, rum, etc., the things to them most precious, next to ikons. Some tables were laid as if company were about to sit down. What a sight for men who had had nothing but dry biscuits and snow water for all those days! But wait; the Russians have fouled wells with filth, and concealed dynamite under the floor of the house they had left. Should they be trusted? There is a box of cigars with the lid open; so inviting. And chocolates; oh, so tantalising! I have an idea. 'Here, Inouye, bring a prisoner along, one captured in this neighbourhood.' 'Yes, officer, this is the table for the transport column. I know it because I am the servant of a paymaster lieutenant. . . . I think the food is all right. . . . Don't throw it to the dogs, sir; I will eat it for you. . . . I have not had a square meal for the last five days,' he adds. We eat the Russians' food, sleep in their houses on Russian beds with Russian blankets that night. It was like having January and June holidays together [both great festival seasons]. How can an outsider know the delight of such an event?"

From this vivacious account it is easy to understand with what joyous satisfaction the Japanese must have contemplated the fruits of their tremendous victory. But we may also be sure that the rejoicing was carefully restrained, and did not include any exhibition of licence, or any description of orgie such as have painfully marked some historic triumphs of Western armies. Indeed, Marshal Oyama, in giving orders for the general advance on March 8th, had issued a special proclamation to the troops

bidding them scrupulously "to respect the sanctity of the place whence arose the Imperial Dynasty of China," and strictly prohibiting any soldiers under his command to take quarter within the walls of the city. It goes without saying that this proclamation and its rigid observance were intensely satisfactory to the Chinese, more especially to the cultured classes at Peking, which had been following the accounts of the great battle with anxious interest. Indeed, the ejection of the Russians from the ancestral home of the Chinese dynasty appears to have impressed the Celestial mind far more strongly than the fall of Port Arthur, and, although the Russians were habitually careful to respect the Imperial Tombs, the Chinese could not fail to note an amazing contrast between the restraint exhibited by the Japanese in their occupation of the city and the frequent arrogance of the former tenants.

Marshal Oyama did not himself make his formal entry into Mukden for some days, and, indeed, as will be seen from the subsequent chapter, he had plenty still to do before he could harvest the fruits of his victory. In reply to his telegram above-quoted, in which he announced the occupation of the city, he had, of course, received the warm congratulations of General Terauchi, the Minister of War—the Mikado's message of high approval was not received until a few days later—and he had modestly telegraphed back ascribing, as all Japanese leaders do, his success to the virtues of the Emperor and the gallantry of his officers and men. For the rest, his reflections on this great day must have been many-sided, and, perhaps, intermittently tinged with a shade of disappointment, as well as illumined with a general glow of triumph.

For, in a measure, unquestionably his plan had failed, notwithstanding his claim of complete success in the telegram which announced the occupation of Mukden. There is no doubt that the object aimed at was the entire envelopment of the Russian armies, and their subsequent annihilation or comprehensive surrender.

Everything points to this; not only the pains taken to conceal the flank on which the decisive turning movement was to be made, but more particularly the great strength of the Japanese right and left. The idea was a grand one, based largely, one would imagine, on an elaborate study of the methods so lovingly handled by Hoenig and other German writers; and it was, as we have seen, executed with Teutonic thoroughness and Japanese brilliance. But it fell very far short of absolute success. Exactly how far short it is not easy to say without knowing more than the world is ever likely to know of the inner workings of Baron Kodama's mind. But certain aspects of the failure present themselves with some clearness to anyone who cares to make a careful comparison of the actual result with what was obviously intended.

In the first place, although the blow dealt against Kuropatkin was a shattering one; although in killed and wounded and prisoners the Russian Commander-in-Chief may have had at least a third of his strength put temporarily out of action, there is a vast difference between this and annihilation, more especially in view of the fact that it had cost Japan between 40,000 and 50,000 casualties to produce this modified result. In emphasising this feature there is no sort of wish to depreciate the Japanese success, which will shortly be estimated at its proper value. It is merely in the mind of the writer to point

out that, while there can be no omelette without the breaking of eggs, it sometimes happens that just as many eggs are required for the preparation of a bad omelette as for that of a good one. The Japanese would doubtless gladly have sacrificed twice 50,000 men to have compassed an absolutely crushing defeat of the Russian army; but to have lost as heavily as they did merely in order to kill some 30,000 Russians, wound perhaps 100,000 more, and take perhaps 50,000 prisoners, was a very much less satisfactory bargain.

Looking at the matter still more closely, one finds that not only did the Japanese plan of envelopment fall short of complete success, but it was not far off failing altogether, and, in the event, was only partially accomplished by what was probably an important deviation from the original plan. Had Kuropatkin been able to check Nozu's advance after the latter had crossed the Hun, and on the morning of the 10th had delivered another desperate attack against Nogi, the chances are that he would have got away with half his actual casualties. Nor would this have been a particularly difficult task if the Russian centre had stood at bay with anything like the tenacity exhibited by the rearguards on the Russian right and left. Even as it was, Kuropatkin succeeded in withdrawing a very large proportion of his forces, and an extraordinarily large proportion of his guns.

The proposition that the original plan must have been departed from rests on the assumption that the cusps of the great crescent formation in which the four armies of Japan advanced to the attack were intended to close completely. They did not do so in the event; in fact, at the close of the operations the extreme Japanese right must still have been at least 50 or 60 miles away from Mukden. The bottle-neck through which the squeezed Russian forces were to pass, failing complete annihilation, was formed at the last moment by the aid, not of Kawamura's Army, but by that of Nozu's. Not only was there no real envelopment, not only were there no real Caudine Forks, but the eel-trap actually constructed was a makeshift affair, which certainly caught a number of fish, but also let a very considerable number escape.

Yet, taking all this into consideration, it is impossible not to recognise the unalterable fact that the Battle of Mukden was a magnificent victory magnificently won, and if in the preceding two or three paragraphs the writer has pointed out a few flaws, such criticism should be welcomed as an attempt to regard this classical operation as seriously as possible from an educational standpoint, instead of treating it as an object of indiscriminating panegyric. When it comes to assigning the Japanese their due meed of praise, and congratulating them on the actual measure of their achievement, it would be easy to fill pages with appreciative comment. That course is not adopted here largely because an effort has already been made to accentuate the points of Japanese superiority, and also because there will be something yet to say in the next chapter with reference to the wonderful manner in which Oyama's commanders helped him afterwards to make the most of such success as he had achieved.

For the rest it is for the present sufficient to say briefly that, apart from the features of which special mention has been made in this and the four preceding chapters, the Japanese had, in regard to

two salient matters, to thank the Russians for disappointment, and for the means of turning that disappointment into rejoicing. Their worst enemy was Liniévitch, who with his Siberian troops kept Kawamura knocking at the doors of Ma-chun-tun and Tita for a much longer period than was convenient for the realisation of the Japanese strategical plan. On the other hand, the victors were undoubtedly helped much by the complete want of co-ordination between Kaulbars and Bilderling. It is an ungracious thing to single out a commander for special criticism on such an occasion, more especially when the circumstances are to some extent obscure. But the retirement of Bilderling appears to have been conducted in a very haphazard fashion, and with few of the precautions which should have been observed by a leader who must have known that he would be promptly and vigorously pursued. Both Liniévitch and Kaulbars appear to have fought their rearguard actions with such fierceness, and to have made such skilful use of their positions, that Oku and Nogi on the west, as well as Kuroki and Kawamura on the east, were repeatedly checked. But Nozu seems to have been able to follow close on the heels of Bilderling and to smite him heavily, with little or no effort on the Russian commander's part to stem an advance absolutely fatal, as it proved, to the Russian chances of getting away from Mukden comparatively unscathed.



Photo: T. Ruddiman Johnston, Tokio.

THE SPOIL OF WAR.

The Russians left enormous quantities of grain and other stores in Japanese hands at Mukden after the great battle, but did their best to destroy as much of it as possible by fire before it fell into the possession of the enemy.

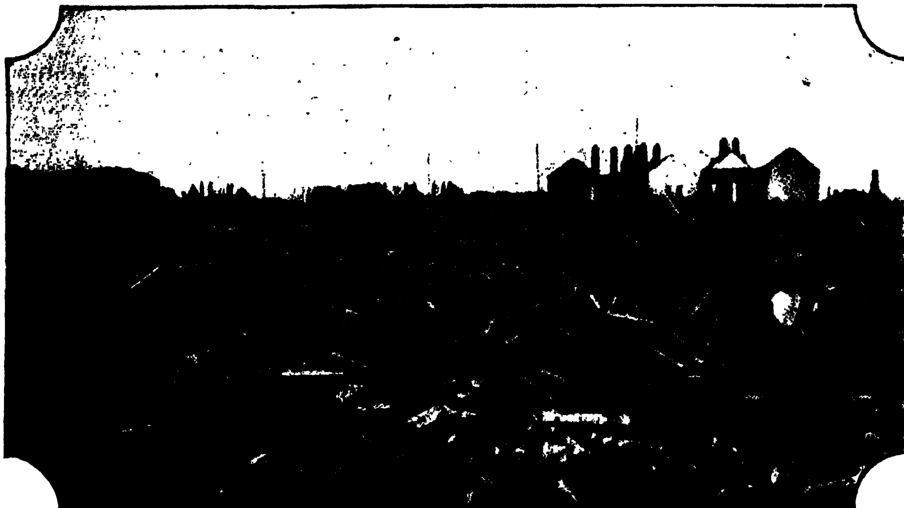


Photo: T. Ruddiman Johnston, Tokio.

MUKDEN RAILWAY STATION AFTER THE BATTLE.

In the foreground are seen piles of partly destroyed gun-cartridge cases left by the Russians in their precipitate retreat.

CHAPTER XCIII.

BATTLE OF MUKDEN (*CONTINUED*)—THE IMMEDIATE SEQUEL—FLIGHT AND PURSUIT—THE ROAD TO TIE-LING—PITIFUL SURRENDERS—OCCUPATION OF TIE-LING—OYAMA ENTERS MUKDEN—KUROPATKIN'S DOWNFALL.

IN order clearly to understand the immediate sequel to the Battle of Mukden it is necessary to revert to the situation as it was about midday on March 10th, by which time the three Russian armies were in full retreat. Material amply sufficient to enable the student to reconstruct that situation was given in the preceding chapter, but a brief recapitulation may be welcome to the more casual and less expert reader. Let us then take Mukden, now in Japanese occupation, as a centre, and endeavour to realise the conditions in which the Russians were now struggling to escape from the toils of their strong and active adversaries.

It may briefly be repeated that throughout the battle the Second Russian Army under Kaulbars constituted the Russian right; the Third Army under Bilderling the Russian centre; and the First Army under Liniévitch the Russian left. Roughly speaking the Army of Port Arthur under Nogi and the former Second Army of Japan under Oku hammered Kaulbars; the old Third or Takushan Army under Nozu pushed on after Bilderling, and incidentally threatened to take Kaulbars in the rear; while Kuroki and Kawamura, having crossed the Hun after the capture of Ma-chun-tun and Tita, occupied Fu-shun, and then followed on the heels of Liniévitch.

For Liniévitch alone the retreat to Tie-ling, and, as it proved, beyond, was

comparatively straightforward, thanks to Kuropatkin's military road leading from Fu-shun northwards. The First Army does not seem to have suffered very severely during its retirement, which was conducted from the first with great skill, and Liniévitch between the Hun and Tie-ling fought several rear-guard actions with some success.

Yet the process must have been an arduous one, for the Japanese came swarming along every road and pathway as full of vigour and determination as they had been at the commencement of this long and terrible conflict. Exactly what forces were in pursuit of Liniévitch it is difficult to say, and will probably always remain a little doubtful, for the dovetailing process which often takes place in such circumstances had now commenced, and it would be difficult indeed to say where one army began and another left off. Nor, of course, did it greatly matter, since divisions in pursuit have at the outset not much to think about beyond keeping the enemy on the trot and overwhelming, if possible, his rearguards. They can thus be trusted to act, at any rate for a day or two, quite independently; and it may be questioned whether during the 11th and 12th Kuroki's and Kawamura's armies were greatly troubled by explicit orders from grand headquarters.

We may, perhaps, safely assume that Kuroki's right and centre and Kawamura's left were chiefly engaged in the chase of the First Russian Army, the remainder of Kawamura's army being extended eastward with a view to heading off, if necessary, any portion of the Russian army that might endeavour to get away *viâ* Kirin to Vladivostok. In this connection it is worthy of note that a Japanese detachment occupied Shin-king, some 60 miles to the east of Mukden, on March 13th.

On the Russian centre and right the conditions of retreat were quite different. In the first place, the geography is of an altogether distinct character, and very much less favourable to rearguard fighting. As accuracy and detail are of great importance in such a connection, we may here avail ourselves of extracts from a valuable article in the *Times* of March 13th, 1905, in which a quantity of first-hand information is succinctly given by one who evidently knows the route well:—

"The Imperial Chinese road from Mukden to Tie-ling leaves the former near its north-east corner, and runs almost due north-east to Tie-ling, a distance of about 43 miles. On first leaving the city there is a level plain, thickly studded with Mandarin burial-places and villages. Three miles to the north is the Pei-ling, and eastward the Tung-ling (Fu-ling), the two Imperial Manchu tombs. The railway runs along the northern side of Mukden city about 600 yards from the earth rampart, crosses the Imperial road, curves north-eastwards, and recrosses the road beyond the first ridge of hills, Lung-Kang or the Dragon Ridge. The ridge connects the two tombs, and is north of Mukden about four miles. Having crossed this ridge the road runs, as does the railway, on a small table-land, and then down into the swampy region of Ta-wa (Great Marsh), which is drained by three small streams flowing into the Pu-ho to the west. This little river runs south under the stone bridge of Ta-shi-chao down into the Hun.

"Pu-ho is a village north of the river of the same name, 13 miles from Mukden on the Imperial road, and near the

junction of the first and second railways. The first makes a *détour* to avoid the tombs and sacred ridge now cut by the direct railway. San-tai-tzu, or 'third beacon,' is the station for Pu-ho village. The modern village of San-tai-tzu lies in a low, flat, marshy plain, and the railway has a high and commanding embankment."

This embankment, by the way, appears to have been the portion of the railway selected by Nogi's detachment for destruction in the interval when the Port Arthur Army was being hung up to the west of Mukden in front of the trenches so stubbornly held by Kaulbars.

"Continuing north-east, from Pu-ho on the Imperial road to Tie-ling, there is a low hill which crosses the road and causes the railway to curve somewhat west. On this ridge stands the little town of Ching-shiu-tai (or 'crystal water beacon'), where stood a great fort in ancient times. The railway runs thence down into a low valley and over a very rugged, rocky spur ('Temple Hill') crowned with rocks and stones, and down a deep cutting. Twenty-three miles north-east of Mukden is the town of I-lu or Yi-lu (I-loo), lying in the mouth of a valley opening westward, on to a marshy plain, over which, nearly four miles distant from the town, runs the railway. I-lu is divided into a north and south town by the little river which flows deep down in a cañon, with steep, loose banks. This river, like several smaller streams, all flowing east and west, is noted for its treacherous mud and boggy beds. I-lu has several caravanserais, and two large fortified shops. Continuing north by east, the road crosses the Fan-ho, with the village of Fan-ho-tun on the north bank. This stream is about 60 yards wide, is semi-frozen now, and flows almost east and west into the Liau. Fan-ho is 30 miles from Mukden. Road and rail now skirt the heads of valleys and hills very closely, crossing two or three small gravel-bottomed streams to Tie-ling."

At Tie-ling occurs a geographical feature which must be kept carefully in mind in view of the subsequent proceedings of the retreating Russian armies.—

"The so-called Tie-ling gorge is about two and a half miles wide at the narrowest part, and seven miles long, and through this flows the Liau river, some 300 yards wide. The railway and main roads all converge here. The town is walled, with suburbs east and west, and the town walls and streets, almost all running east and west, almost block the way through the gorge. The north and south roads, two in number, are in winter in times of peace perpetually blocked by carts and pack mules. Caravans hate passing through for this reason. The open space between the west suburb and the river is full of dykes and ditches at right angles to the road and river, and much of the space is occupied by the Russian station, engine works, and the cantonment.

"West of Tie-ling and rising from the river are low hills, rolling back into Mongolia, with roads nearly all running east and west. Eastward of Tie-ling is a mountain spur, the Tie-ling, or Iron Ridge, abutting on the east suburb, and running as a solid and rugged ridge right down to the south-east for nearly 50 miles. Thus all traffic, excepting local pack animals, must pass through the Tie-ling gorge. Northward the hill formation is the same, only more rugged."

From the above it will be seen that the line of retreat for the Second and Third



FIRST [illegible] IN [illegible] BATTLEFIELD

[illegible]

Armies would have been by no means easy, even if Bilderling had succeeded in checking Nozu, and Kaulbars had beaten back Nogi and broken the continuity of Oku's pursuit. But with Bilderling in full stride, and Kaulbars absolutely forced to break ground for fear of being utterly enveloped and overwhelmed, the difficulties were naturally multiplied; with the result that confusion occurred, losses were suffered, and miseries were undergone as terrible as any recorded in the most disastrous retreats in history. Kuropatkin had already taken time by the forelock as regards the withdrawal of many of his stores, and before the Japanese cut the railway most of the rolling-stock had been removed, with all the wounded, except 1,500 whose condition was serious, and who were left behind with a sufficient number of doctors to tend them. The baggage trains were sent by four routes across the fields and along the roads, together with most of the guns. Several of the latter, however, and a line of waggons about 12 miles long had to be abandoned not far out from Mukden. On the whole, however, the withdrawal of stores, ammunition, and guns was not unsuccessfully accomplished, especially when it is remembered than on March 9th there was a duststorm of unusual violence.

When finally the order for a general retreat of the Russian troops was given, General Bilderling took the level country on both sides of the Mandarin Road, and General Kaulbars the strips on either side of the railway.

Of the horrors of that retreat it is difficult to form any conception that does not fall far short of the ghastly reality. The mere passage of such enormous bodies of men, guns, and carts along a strip of plain, the available marching space in which was sometimes not more than five miles wide, could not but tend to confusion, even if there had been no panic and no barring of the way. But the nimble Japanese in pursuit were able from time to time to dash in on the flank of a retreating column and harass it with artillery fire. Moreover, it will be remembered that Nozu and Nogi were joining hands across the road and rail to the north of Mukden, and the moral effect alone of this interception to their retreat must have been terribly shattering to the nerves of the fleeing Russians.

In regard to this cutting of the Russian line of retreat the Japanese ran considerable risk. For at first it was difficult for such comparatively small forces as they were able on the 10th and 11th to employ in this work to stem the torrent of desperate men, now fully alive to the hopelessness of their situation. The *Times* correspondent with Kuroki's Army mentions the case of one of Nozu's regiments, which found itself "surrounded like a rock in a stream by the flood of a flying brigade." It resisted stubbornly, however, and inflicted such loss on the Russians that it received the much-prized *kanjo*, or message of praise.

Surrenders were frequent. A Japanese division came upon the 9th Regiment of European Sharpshooters near the railway, and proceeded to bar its retreat. The regiment fought for a time, and then the men tied handkerchiefs to their rifles. Later in the same day another Russian regiment surrendered in the same way. "Many of the companies and battalions fresh from Europe quite lost their way, and waited like men in a maze till capture should clarify the situation. After main bodies had been gathered in and marched off in formation came the groups and the stragglers—

the tired men who still went on retreating towards Kharbin till they saw the *Makaki* (yellow dwarfs) across their path, when they lay down their rifles, and sank to the roadside in utter fatigue. Even after the pass was captured a battery of artillery, fully equipped in battle order, rode in and fatalistically, and even jauntily, gave itself up. Their commander did not know the roads, and he saw nothing else to do."

Of the individual stragglers the *Times* correspondent above-quoted gives a pathetic description:—

"The poor *mujiks*—superstitious and childlike—worn by vigils and fighting and marching, were pitiful in their suppliancy to a degree beyond the comprehension of free peoples. An unarmed correspondent and a censor met four armed Russian privates on the road. . . . They fell to their knees in Oriental obeisance. One of them held out a cheap American safety razor—a present when he left home, doubtless—his dearest possession. When they were made to understand that they were to fall in behind their captors' horses, one—he of the safety razor—influenced by the refusal of his gift presumably, was still quite unconvinced that he was not to be killed, for he chanted prayers from a book as he shuffled along. It was with this lot as with scores of others, who had hidden in Chinese houses till the Japanese line had passed, and then came timidly out to the roadside at what their primitive and cunning intelligence considered to be a favourable moment."

Here is another sad picture from the pen of the Japanese officer, Lieutenant Tokutaro Oshio, from whose letter we have already derived such vivid descriptions of the fight round Mukden. He was not, apparently, engaged in the pursuit, but on March 11th took some bearers and surgeons out into the fields, distributing biscuits, water, hot tea, and other comforts to the wounded whom the retreating columns had left behind them:—

"Among the wounded Russians upon the field was a boy of barely 16 or 17, a drummer-boy, shot through both legs. He held a rosary in his hand, praying. Poor mite, the pity of it! Pointing to the Red Cross upon the arm of a bearer I called out in Chinese, 'Surgeon, my brave little fellow.' No answer. Then in Russian, 'Doctor.' And told him he was safe. This in German—that was about my stock of languages. He was a Pole, I believe, as he spoke German. He was so thirsty that my bottle was not enough for him, so another half of the bearer's bottle was given to him, too, and he had some biscuits. I had a strong yearning to ask him about his home; but no, he is weak, and his spirit must be kept up. 'Your wound is nothing, the Japanese hospital attendants will be here soon to take you away. And soon you will be able to go home to your parents.' Covering him up with blankets and coats taken from the Russian dead, I was just walking away when he cried out after me: 'A moment, officer, a moment. Kind officer, I have something to give you—this book. It was given to me by my father when I was leaving home for the front. I have nothing more valuable to offer you, sir. It is the most precious thing I possess.' And he kissed my hand repeatedly, crying bitterly.

"I accepted the book, and without a word turned away to find another sufferer. I would not have broken down for a colonelcy before those bearers and my own men.

"The book was entitled 'Himmels-

brod,' or ' Ein Gebetbuch fur Jugend.' " Comparatively fortunate, indeed, were the Russians who were thus dropped in the wake of Kuropatkin's retreating forces to fall into the hands of the humane Japanese. Much more miserable must have been the lot of the fugitives who rushed on unfed and weary along the narrowed passage leading to Tie-ling. For them there was not only all the discomfort, privation, and physical suffering which a forced and precipitate retreat involves, but also the constant fear of being overtaken, caught in the flank, or directly intercepted by their extraordinarily agile adversaries. Such apprehensions led to various panics, a serious one occurring at San-tai-tzu, some 10 miles north of Mukden, where a number of lives were lost and quantities of stores abandoned.

It was expected by some competent critics that Kuropatkin would make a stand at Tie-ling, which had been elaborately fortified, apparently in anticipation of a withdrawal, forced or otherwise, from Mukden. It is said that the works were of quite exceptional strength, skilful advantage having as usual been taken of the highlands along the line of the Tie-ling River, which are somewhat similar in appearance to those which faced Buller at Colenso. It would seem that the Japanese were prepared for opposition at Tie-ling, for the pursuing forces are said to have halted at some distance from the Tie-ling gorge, instead of pressing on and endeavouring to inflict as much damage as possible upon the enemy while passing through this defile. On the other hand, Marshal Oyama's despatches favour the idea that the pursuit was more or less continuous. The explanation may be that the Japanese forces in rear did advance without intermission, but that the leading bodies in pursuit were for a time brought to a standstill by fear lest an over-hasty attempt to "rush" Tie-ling might be rudely checked by fresh troops strongly posted behind formidable defences. For, while it is on record that the first Russian fugitives from Mukden reached Tie-ling in 30 hours, it was not until the sixth day after the battle that Oyama was able to telegraph to Tokio as follows :—

"Our forces, everywhere driving the enemy before them, occupied Tie-ling at 12.20 a.m. on March 16th."

In the interval there had been a good deal of stiff fighting, the brunt of which must have fallen on a portion of General Oku's Army, which is estimated to have lost in the course of the Mukden battle and the subsequent pursuit some 20,000 men. On March 14th the Japanese fiercely attacked some positions south of Tie-ling which were being held by the 4th Siberian Army Corps belonging to the First Russian Army, and, according to the Russian despatches, they left 1,000 corpses on the field. But, as we have seen, the resistance offered was not prolonged. The 4th Siberian Army Corps was simply acting as the rearguard of the still retreating Russian armies, and the actual occupation of Tie-ling by the Japanese followed without further serious fighting, the Russians retiring steadily northwards.

The railway station and buildings at Tie-ling were found to be on a large scale, rivalling, according to the Japanese official despatches, those at Liao-yang. Large quantities of provisions and forage had been stored in the vicinity, but nearly two-thirds of these were burnt by the Russians before their withdrawal. From Tie-ling the Japanese again took up the pursuit, but it is convenient to



A COMMON INCIDENT OF THE GREAT RETREAT FROM MUKDEN: RUSSIAN STRAGGLERS SURRENDERING TO THE JAPANESE

postpone the account of the operations subsequent to March 16th to a future chapter. For shortly after the Japanese occupation of Tie-ling the immediate local effect of the Battle of Mukden began to wear off. In the meantime this immense operation of war was having far-reaching consequences in various other directions to which it is now necessary to devote attention.

Before, however, we leave the actual field of warfare there are some details concerning both the victorious and vanquished commanders which may be lightly dealt with. Giving well-merited precedence to the Japanese, we find Marshal Oyama, on March 15th, making his formal entry with his Staff into Mukden. The scene was an impressive one, a marked difference being naturally observable between the surroundings here and at the entry into Port Arthur by General Nogi. At Mukden the prevailing note was one of joyful welcome, the Chinese being delighted to greet and acclaim the victorious commander who had delivered them from the Russian incubus. The fact that Oyama a decade since had himself been largely concerned in the humiliation of the Chinese Imperial Army was of small account to the Celestial mind compared with his present position, not only as the champion of the integrity of China, but also as the actual leader of the most powerful army in Asia. It is not surprising, then, that the public buildings and other houses in Mukden were profusely decorated on this interesting occasion, thousands of Japanese flags being exhibited. As a matter of course, the Chinese officials welcomed Oyama, and crowds of Chinese residents congregated to witness the procession of the Field-Marshal and his Staff through the city. Another, and in a way more interesting, reception was accorded to the veteran commander by such of his own troops as were encamped near Mukden. These lined the streets leading from the South Gate, at which the entry took place, displaying their tattered colours, and it is not difficult to imagine the conflict of emotions in Oyama's mind as he passed through these glorious avenues, splendidly reminiscent of the storm and stress of battle, proudly significant of superbly won success, but still pathetically suggestive of sacrifice all the more terrible by reason of the grand material so sadly, so irretrievably expended. Coincidentally with the formal entry into Mukden, the Emperor of Japan despatched the following message to his Manchurian armies :—

"Since the autumn the enemy had been erecting strong defences at Mukden, and had been holding the district with superior force, and were confident of victory over our Manchurian armies. Forestalling the enemy, however, we boldly and vigorously assumed the offensive, and, after strenuous fighting for more than 10 days and nights through the snow and biting wind, defeated a strong enemy, driving them to Tie-ling, taking tens of thousands of prisoners, and otherwise inflicting serious injuries.

"Through this signal victory our Manchurian armies have enhanced the military prestige of the country at home and abroad. We are deeply gratified by the courage and endurance with which our officers and men were able to achieve such a great success, and we look to you for even greater exertions in the future."

It is somewhat melancholy to turn from this picture of well-ordered enjoyment of a victorious situation to the far less pleasant aspect presented by the Russians in defeat. That such a disaster

as the Mukden battle had proved should be followed by much heartburning, and even by some acrid criticism, was only to be expected. But in most disinterested quarters something of a shock was experienced when it was learnt that the Tsar had, as the result of Kuropatkin's failure, relieved the latter of his duties as Commander-in-Chief, and had elevated General Liniévitch to the vacant leadership of the Russian armies in the Far East. Although the disgrace inflicted upon Kuropatkin was not complete, since he was allowed to remain at the front as the Commander of the First Army, it was felt that the blow might well have been further softened in the case of one who, whatever may have been his shortcomings, was perhaps the most loyal and devoted, as he was certainly one of the bravest and least self-seeking, of all the Tsar's servants. But the Tsar in this instance fully sustained his reputation for mingled weakness, obstinacy, and ineptitude. It is understood that, immediately after the result of the Battle of Mukden became known, the Tsar consulted a succession of generals at St. Petersburg, including the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaievitch, General Sukhomlinoff, General Grodekoff, and General Roop, with a view to inducing one of them to accept the chief command in Manchuria, but one and all declined to take up the heavy burden. The Tsar, however, was so determined that Kuropatkin should be relieved, that he finally decided upon the elevation of Liniévitch, to whom, according to the St. Petersburg correspondent of the Berlin *Tageblatt*, the Emperor peremptorily and even brusquely bade Kuropatkin



GENERAL SOUKHOMLINOFF.

hand over his command. And so, in an atmosphere of Imperial disgrace, with the stigma of a great defeat clinging irremovably to his name, Kuropatkin dropped from his proud position as the leader of all the Russian armies in the Far East to a subordinate command, the bitterness of his position accentuated by the fact that he was being superseded by a man to whom only yesterday he was giving orders. Well might the military correspondent of the *Times*, dealing with Kuropatkin's downfall, remark, in a passage of singular force and discrimination: "The prevailing sentiment throughout the world will be one of sympathy with General Kuropatkin, and of regret that the magnanimity which we usually associate with the actions of monarchs should not have inspired the Emperor of Russia to extend to a faithful servant, who has borne the burden and heat of a year of war, some measure of Imperial gratitude. So far as Kuropatkin personally has been concerned, he has always been a popular figure, and regret will be expressed, even among those who have not the slightest sympathy with Russia's cause in this war, that such a persistent run of ill-luck should have followed Skobeleff's old Chief of the Staff, and that not one gleam of success should have been vouchsafed to him after such a long and honourable career spent in the service of his country.

"His difficulties have been nowhere more fully appreciated than in England. The unreadiness of Russia for war, the childish presumption of the Russian diplomacy, the hopeless failure of the Russian Navy, the inferiority of many of the troops first dispatched to the seat of war, the incompetence of Russian generals and of the Headquarters Staff in the field, the appalling difficulties of reinforcement, supply, and transport, and, worst of all, the marked superiority of the Japanese Army as an instrument of war, which gradually became disclosed during the course of operations, have all served to extend to Kuropatkin no small measure of public sympathy."

But the same critic, and other critics less capable and less fair, declined to permit these facts in Kuropatkin's favour to modify appreciably their ultimate condemnation of Kuropatkin as a man who had both disappointed expectation and had failed to make the best use of the advantages and opportunities he had actually enjoyed. Some even refused to admit the plea so often advanced in Kuropatkin's favour, namely, that he was subject to continual prompting, interruption, and interference, first Viceregal, and latterly Imperial. It was urged that in any case he ought to have risen superior to such influence, or to have resigned when it became intolerable. Finally, it was submitted that his incapacity had been repeatedly, and now conclusively, proved, that from the Yalu battle onwards he committed a series of demonstrably bad mistakes. In a word, Kuropatkin's position after the Battle of Mukden was, in some respects, not unlike that of Sir Redvers Buller after the Battle of Colenso, the similarity of the cases being curiously enhanced by the personal popularity still enjoyed by the unsuccessful leaders among the rank and file of their commands.

While admitting the force of many of the arguments adduced by Kuropatkin's severer critics, the present writer is inclined to the belief that only after many years will it be possible to estimate at all accurately the extent of blame attached to this truly unfortunate leader.

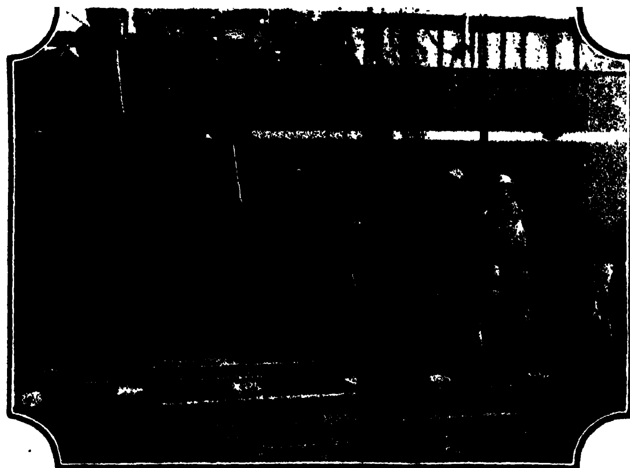


GENERAL LINIEVITCH, SUCCESSOR TO GENERAL KUROPATKIN AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE RUSSIAN ARMIES IN MANCHURIA.

Not only is contemporary judgment peculiarly liable to have been warped by the prevailing uncertainty as to actual facts, but it must be constantly borne in mind that Kuropatkin's position was altogether exceptional, to an extent which it is quite possible that he alone of living men could realise. The Russians were outclassed by the Japanese as much as the French were outclassed by the Germans in 1870, as the Chinese were by the Japanese in 1895, as the Spaniards were by the Americans in 1898; and it is an extremely grave and serious question whether other armies besides those of the Tsar would have been able to make headway against such a crushing weight as Japan, by dint of years of preparation and of unparalleled self-sacrifice, was able to bring to bear upon her enemy in the land operations from the Battle of the Yalu to the occupation of Mukden. Posterity, regarding all this, possibly in the light of Japan's future and still more complete self-revelation, may come to the conclusion that not only was Kuropatkin only partly to be blamed for not having beaten back the oncoming tide, but that he deserved much praise for having withstood it as long as he did, and for having assisted his forces to escape from it with terrible losses, it is true, but without anything approaching complete annihilation.

A final word may be said in reference to the argument that, if Kuropatkin suffered from interference on the part more especially of his Imperial master, he ought to have shown himself a man of backbone by immediately threatening to resign.

There is another side to this oft-debated question. Kuropatkin was probably under the firm impression that if he threatened to resign, his resignation would be accepted, and that the appointment of another man might mean swift disaster. Accordingly he hung on, just as Wellington did in the Peninsula, notwithstanding the fact that the latter's position was badly compromised by the behaviour of the Government at home. But Wellington succeeded, and Kuropatkin failed. That is the real, perhaps the only, difference.



RUSSIAN PRISONERS AND WOMEN FROM PORT ARTHUR EMBARKING AT DALNY.

CHAPTER XCIV.

THE BATTLE OF MUKDEN DISCUSSED—ITS MAGNITUDE—EFFECT UPON FUTURE STRATEGY—FOREIGN VIEWS—CURIOUS CONSEQUENCES—POSITION OF THE BELLIGERENTS—JAPAN IN CLOVER—PROGRESS IN KOREA—RUSSIAN DISABILITIES—FRENCH LOAN REFUSED—THE WAR TO CONTINUE.

THE conclusion of the Battle of Mukden affords a convenient halting-place at which we may both glance briefly at the impression created by this momentous and brilliant, though not completely decisive, victory upon the minds of the onlooker nations, and also review the course of events in other portions of the theatre of war.

In regard to both these processes it is necessary to take a somewhat broader view than is afforded by contemporary comments, more especially in the world's newspaper press. Such comments are of peculiar value when a battle is either absolutely decisive or is merely incidental. In those cases the freshness and vigour of contemporary criticism are often more convincing, and sometimes even more useful, than the elaborate judgments of posterity, if only for the reason that there is a good deal more human nature packed up in the frank utterances of journalism than in the studied impartialities of history. In the case, too, of an incidental or a decisive victory, the newspaper critic works on a sure foundation. If he knows that the battle as to which he is "letting himself go" is only an episode, or is a grand *finale*, he is at least correct in the proposition from which he starts, and is so far the equal of the finest historian that ever lived.

But there are battles—and the Battle of Mukden is peculiarly one of these—as to which contemporary judgment is not very dependable. When it became known that the Japanese had occupied not only Mukden but Tie-ling also, that the Russians had lost between a third and a fourth of their total strength in killed, wounded, and prisoners, and were still retreating, it was assumed by many that, practically speaking, the land fighting was over, and that, accordingly, Mukden had been a decisive victory. Not until some weeks later were these pessimists—who, indeed, were hardly to be blamed for jumping to conclusions—convinced of the full extent of their error. Not that Mukden could possibly be called with any fairness an "incidental" battle, such as the Battles of the Sha-ho and Hei-kou-tai. But, equally, it could not be termed decisive, since it neither brought the war to a conclusion nor even put the Russian military forces in Manchuria *hors de combat*.

It goes without saying that comments founded on an entirely wrong conception of the nature and results of a great victory are somewhat misleading. No useful purpose, then, would be served by the application to the present case of the rule, hitherto usually followed in this history, of quoting not only British, but Continental and American Press opinions on leading events of the war. Well-

ordered abstinence in this respect, however, imposes on the writer the added responsibility of treating the Battle of Mukden from a somewhat lofty standpoint, the view from which is here and there obscured by political clouds and international jealousies.

Taking the battle first in its military aspect, we find, in addition to the considerations already advanced in Chapter XCII., that very soon the outsiders were more forcibly and permanently impressed with the bigness of this tremendous conflict than with any other attribute. At first sight this may seem a trivial suggestion, but it will bear thinking about, and has a very important bearing upon the future conditions of military science throughout the world.

A careful estimate of the total forces engaged in the Battle of Mukden was given in Chapter LXXXVIII. (pp. 42-44 of the present volume), from which, on the authority of the extremely well-informed Tokio correspondent of the *Times*, it is assumed that about 750,000 men—according to some Japanese estimates, 850,000—went into the fight. The nearest approach to these stupendous figures that occurs previously to the Russo-Japanese War is afforded by the cases of the Battle of Leipsic in 1813, of Königgrätz in 1866, and Gravelotte in 1870, in each of which battles from 400,000 to 430,000 men were engaged. At Solferino, in 1859, the total forces on both sides aggregated nearly 300,000; at Wagram, 1809, they amounted to 280,000; at Borodino, 1812, to 250,000; and at Jena, 1806, to 200,000. According to revised and authoritative Japanese calculations, there may have been as many as 460,000 in the fighting line at Liao-yang, and 580,000 in that at the Battle of the Sha-ho. But from even the last-quoted figures to those given for the Mukden struggle there is a very long jump, and when from mere paper statistics we pass to an attempt to realise mentally the actual size of the forces engaged, the amazing magnitude of the operation soon begins to impress itself upon the dullest imagination.

Again, the extraordinary duration of the Mukden battle, largely exceeding, as it did, that of even the long and weary fighting at Liao-yang, has a serious significance. At Borodino the conflict lasted for 12½ hours, at Wagram for 14 hours, and at Leipsic for three days. But what is this compared with the struggle at Mukden, which commenced not later than February 24th, and the immediate objective of which was not reached until March 10th, while the pursuit to Tie-ling occupied another five or six days?

These facts and figures have very much more than isolated importance, and it is essential to emphasise this fact in any attempt to reckon the results of the Battle of Mukden, and its effect more especially upon the outside world. An operation of war must be taken very seriously indeed when it not only breaks records but upsets preconceived notions as to the possibilities of co-operation and the limits of human endurance. Let us first take the question of mere numbers, and try to realise what a new departure is indicated by the employment on one belligerent side alone of nearly, if not quite, as many men as in any previous war have been included in both opposing forces. What a long step forward this carries us from the postulate, to which reference was made in Chapter LX. (Vol. II., p. 185), that few leaders are capable of controlling effectively an army of more than 100,000, or at most 150,000, men. The postulate is still, and will

always remain, a postulate. There will occasionally arise Napoleons who can personally direct and personally influence the movements of 200,000 or 250,000 troops, and it is probable that in such cases the increased vigour and initiative displayed will render a force so led fully equal, if not superior, to one numerically half as large again—even assuming the latter to be reasonably well handled. But Napoleons are, of course, outside the question. They were not present, at any rate, at Mukden. Poor Kuropatkin at his best never really influenced the movements of more than one of his armies, and in the great battle just described nothing was more remarkable than the independence of Liniévitch and the want of co-ordination between Bilderling and Kaulbars.



Photo: Copyright, H. C. White & Co.
IMPRESSIVE FUNERAL PROCESSION OF JAPANESE OFFICERS AT HIROSHIMA, JAPAN.

Even on the side of Japan we have nothing approaching Napoleonic or Wellingtonian genius in the actual conduct of the battle. Yet the machinery worked

on the whole very smoothly, and not only were some 400,000 men set and kept in motion, and a very important, if not decisive, victory won, but unforeseen obstacles were encountered and surmounted, and important modifications were introduced in the original plan. If this could be done with not far short of 500,000 men, split up into five armies under the nominal control of a leader of admirable sagacity, but admittedly not of Napoleonic calibre, is not a point likely to be reached at which the terms "Army" and "Commander-in-Chief" will become very vague, if not altogether meaningless, terms where first-class wars between great powers are concerned? Is not the approach of an era indicated in which a nation's military forces in the mind may conceivably include from six to a dozen armies, each from 100,000 to 150,000 strong, and all co-ordinated under the direction of a central staff? Against such a collection of armies, provided that the leadership of each was good, and the general control was moderately well exercised, Napoleon himself, with a poor 250,000 men, might find it impossible to struggle for more than a few months at most.

Of course, it will be understood that the possibilities of envelopment afforded by the employment of such enormous masses of men and guns will always be subject to some limitations. In the first place, not only have the men to be trained to the requisite pitch of endurance; not only have all ranks of leaders, from the company commanders to the general commanding one of the armies, to understand clearly the exact part they play in a gigantic scheme; not only has the controlling staff to be certain that each part of the vast machine will stand any strain that may be put upon it. The problems of transport and supply must in such cases become so extraordinarily difficult and complicated as to produce eventually an *impasse* beyond which the wealthiest and most patriotic nation, with the hugest resources in the way of trained soldiers and skilled commanders, cannot go. But here, again, is it safe to prophesy? Were there not plenty of experts at the beginning of the war to say confidently that in Manchuria it would be impossible for Russia to support an army of more than about 250,000, even if the Siberian Railway were taxed to the utmost limit of its capacity? Yet it is practically certain that Kuropatkin had at Mukden at least 360,000 men under his command, and these simply could not have fought as manfully as they did had not the local food resources been at least reasonably sufficient.

Taking, however, all possible limitations and restrictions into careful account, the solid fact remains that the Battle of Mukden opened the eyes of the world to a broader conception of the potential bigness of war than had hitherto been deemed in any way necessary. It was a transition from thinking in tens of thousands to thinking in hundreds of thousands, and for a single battle to mark such a transition is a very large historical fact, which posterity may grasp with a good deal more completeness than is possible, or at any rate easy, at present.

Closely allied with, and yet very distinct from, this question of numbers is one on which we have already touched lightly, that, namely, of endurance. As to this, Major-General Nagaoka, Assistant Chief of the Headquarters Staff at Tokio, is reported to have made some singularly interesting observations in a speech delivered before the Oriental

Association shortly after the Battle of Mukden. He indicated that, in the opinion of the Japanese General Staff, such operations as the battle in question curiously falsified the expectation that the contrivances of science would minimise the value of the soldier's physique. It is clear that the objects secured by the Mukden victory could not have been secured by the most patriotic and skilfully led troops in the world unless the latter had been extraordinarily sturdy and capable of the most astonishing feats of endurance. There are not many nowadays who regard soldiers chiefly as "food for powder," and consider that anything with two legs and two arms who can carry and let off a rifle is good enough for the ranks of a battalion on active service.

But even to thoughtful and experienced critics the Battle of Mukden brought grave reflections as to the part which cultivated endurance might play in future armed struggles for existence. There had hitherto been a habit of assuming that an enemy's endurance could not possibly exceed a standard which, although undefined, was certainly well within limits largely exceeded at Mukden by the Russians as well as by the Japanese. It was not, perhaps, an altogether pleasant thought for some European nations that troops magnificently trained up to a certain pitch, and hitherto deemed capable of any strain likely to be put upon them, might crumble to nothing when called upon to face such an ordeal as a battle lasting without intermission a fortnight or three weeks.

Beyond these abstract considerations there is no doubt that the outside world was far more profoundly impressed by the Japanese occupation of Mukden than it had been by the ejection of the Russians from Liao-yang, important as the latter operation was universally admitted to be. Liao-yang had from the first the appearance of a sort of advanced post; but Mukden, as long as it remained in Russian occupation, was a military centre of a different sort. After the isolation of Port Arthur, Mukden naturally became the seat of government for Russia in Manchuria, and when Kuropatkin fell back on it from Liao-yang, and it became also the principal Russian military headquarters, it was clear that only at a terrible loss of prestige could the Russian armies withdraw from a point so variously significant. To the impression made upon the Chinese by the victorious entry of the Japanese into the city of the Imperial tombs, allusion has already been made. But Europe and America on the whole, perhaps, saw the Russian forced retreat from Mukden in a clearer light, in that they were not wholly influenced by sentimental considerations.

As a matter of cold fact, it was easy for the most casual student of the war to observe that the practical advantages sacrificed by the Russians in allowing themselves to be squeezed out of their positions in this vicinity were very substantial. The loss of the Fu-shun coal-mines alone was a most serious matter. But probably even more sharply felt by the Russian troops was the cutting off of Sin-ming-ting as a source of supplies. A little reflection, too, shows that in some respects the Japanese gained more by the occupation of Mukden than even the Russians had lost. Their supply system was now on a footing which, considering how recently they had arrived in Manchuria, was quite amazingly satisfactory. To them, with immense store depôts at both Liao-yang and Niu-chwang, and communication between Liao-yang and the Northern Korea, it was easy to create a

fresh accumulation at Mukden in order to provide swiftly and adequately for the needs of the troops thrown forward to Tie-ling or beyond.

It was also clear to the onlooker nations that strategically the occupation of Mukden and Tie-ling was a very important step forward. While these places and a line of country at least 50 miles to the east was held by the Russians, it was useless for the Japanese to look beyond. But now that even Tie-ling was captured, and the Russians were being driven farther and farther northward, it became more possible for the extreme Japanese right to be pushed forward far beyond Shin-king—which, as already noted, was occupied on March 13th—until eventually a wedge might conceivably be driven between the Russians at Kirin or Harbin and Vladivostok. The possible designation of Kawamura's Army of the Yalu for this object has been suggested in a previous chapter.

From military aspects such as these we have now to turn, rather abruptly, to a political consequence of the Battle of Mukden, a consequence so strange, so striking, that, but for its unquestioned reality, it might almost be described as a sort of historical nightmare. Politics, especially of the international variety, are full of quaint complications and surprises, but seldom have they produced any outcome more unexpected and embarrassing than German interference in Morocco as the direct result of the Japanese occupation of Mukden! It has been the duty of the present historian from time to time to point out how the war in the Far East impinged on European affairs, and in this connection Germany has occasionally figured in a *rôle* more or less dignified, but not of salient historical importance. Anxiety for the security of German interests in Shan-tung, and a cheerful readiness to profit commercially by supplying coal to the Third Russian Pacific Squadron on its way to the Far East, had hitherto made it difficult for even the German Emperor to fill the stage in any scene, however trivial, of the war drama now running. But the Battle of Mukden was, rightly or wrongly, taken by the Kaiser as his cue, and, accordingly, Europe was unexpectedly treated to a singular diversion, with German Diplomacy as a central figure, and with Morocco, of all places in the world, in the background.

The growth of *l'entente cordiale* between Great Britain and France, and the fact that it had survived, and had even been intensified by certain vicissitudes arising out of the war, had, perhaps naturally, been viewed with marked disfavour in Germany. Superadded to the Dual Alliance between France and Russia, and coincident with a better understanding between France and Italy, "*l'entente*" constituted in the German mind a source of uneasiness only relieved by a doubt as to its sincerity. To test that question of sincerity it was only necessary to find a useful bone of contention with either England or France, to make a good deal of noise, and to note whether the country not actually concerned would come to the assistance of its reputed friend. To attempt to bully England was not altogether safe. Public opinion in England was not in a mood to brook Teutonic interference, and the British Fleet was very much in evidence as a factor which might have to be reckoned with, even if France stood completely aside.

With France the case was somewhat different. But in her case the Russian Alliance had until recently been sufficient



HOW THE JAPANESE HAVE KEPT THEMSELVES ALIVE AND WARM DURING THE RIGOURS OF WINTER.

to ensure her immunity from German bluff. Until the Battle of Mukden there was always the chance that Kuropatkin might turn the tables on Japan, and in that event Russia would have been very well able to lend France substantial aid against Germany, assuming that "*l'entente*" proved to be a hollow mockery. But the Battle of Mukden was evidently sufficient proof to the German Emperor that Russia was practically a negligible quantity in this direction. France was, therefore, with no loss of time, subjected to a characteristically German diplomatic process in order to see whether the newly-born friendship with England was of any practical account.

This testing process took the shape of a sudden German interference in the affairs of Morocco, in which France had admittedly, by reason of previous dealings and the proximity of Algeria, a special interest. England and France had come previously to a friendly agreement with respect to this troubled and ill-governed country, with the result that, in the ordinary course of things, France would have been left with a comparatively free hand. But Germany, on the pretext that this agreement had not been officially communicated to her, now gave France plainly to understand that German interest in Morocco was of a singularly close and even paternal character, and that it was the Kaiser's august intention to take the Sultan more or less under his protection. The Kaiser himself went in his yacht to Tangier, a German mission to the Sultan was put in hand, and France was given to understand that she must be prepared to put up with what, under the circumstances, could only amount to unmistakable humiliation.

Into the details of this interlude it is not necessary to go. It is sufficient to say that at one moment matters took an extremely serious turn. France had already made some concession to avoid a rupture, and Germany was pushing her advantage when, it is understood, the British Government gave France quietly to understand that, if German demands went beyond a certain point, Great Britain would side with the other party to *l'entente cordiale* by resisting these demands to the uttermost. France was thus enabled to present a much firmer front to Germany, and the latter was convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that *l'entente cordiale* was an institution which needed something more than flat-footed diplomacy and theatrical bluff to disturb it.

Abortive as this particular performance was, it was curiously instructive as the first important indication of changes which the war in the Far East was about to produce in the European situation generally. Until the Battle of Mukden showed on what a doubtful foundation even Russia's military power rested, it would have been risky to assume that the European equilibrium would be entirely upset by the Japanese successes in the Far East, brilliant and far-reaching as these unquestionably were. But from this point onwards we see indications of new groupings of the Great European Powers, and for this reason alone the great Battle of Mukden must rank in history as an event perhaps scarcely inferior to Waterloo in its intrinsic and eventual significance.

Let us now return to the theatre of war, and take a look round at the situation as it now is, not only in Manchuria, but in other quarters to which a fighting interest is attached. In some respects

this survey must be a brief one, as there are details, especially those connected with the naval position of affairs, into which it will be necessary to go closely in subsequent chapters. But the present is a convenient opportunity at which to discuss the stage reached in regard to one or two developments to which it will not be possible to devote a separate chapter, but which none the less have an important bearing upon the conduct of the war and the chances of peace.

First, as to the approach of Admiral Rozhdestvensky's squadron, it is important to bear in mind the relation of the Battle of Mukden to the bare possibility of a coming Russian victory on the sea. Seldom in the world's history has a more instructive lesson in the influence of sea power been afforded by a mere possibility, and for that reason a few lines may be devoted to the subject, notwithstanding the fact that, in the actual event, the possibility in question vanished into very thin air indeed.

We have seen how, short of being actually decisive, the Battle of Mukden was, as land victories go, about as big and important a victory as could easily be conceived. But it is a striking reflection that, if Admiral Rozhdestvensky's squadron could have achieved the result so fondly expected, could have shattered Japan's naval supremacy, and given Russia even temporary command of the Sea of Japan, the fruits of the Mukden battle would to the Japanese have been the very worst sort of Dead Sea apples. Even as it was, Japan would soon have to proceed warily as regards allowing her transports to carry fresh stores and reinforcements to Niu-chwang and Northern Korea, for fear lest detached Russian cruisers might intercept these valuable freights. For Japan could no longer afford to send her warships as escorts, since her battle-fleet was being held in readiness to meet Rozhdestvensky's squadron in home waters. If the coming conflict on the sea should by ill chance prove disastrous to Japan, the position of her huge army in Manchuria would soon prove precarious, notwithstanding its unbroken chain of successes and the huge stores accumulated at Liao-yang. For the moment, for a few weeks, even for a month or two, all might have been well. But nearly 500,000 men require a deal of feeding, and, cut off from their island home, with only poor countries—assuming the neutrality of China to be preserved intact—from which to draw supplies, Oyama and his splendid quintette of generals would have had a very uphill game to play.

On the other hand, Japan had displayed wonderful energy, industry, and patience in taking precautionary measures, which not only minimised the above-noted risks, but which, assuming those risks to have been successfully removed, constituted a splendid preparation for future efforts. With the steps she took in order to provide Rozhdestvensky with the warmest of warm welcomes, we shall deal more particularly at a later date. But at such a stage as is indicated by the occupation of Mukden and Tieling, it is useful to remember that, in addition to her extraordinary military activity in Manchuria, Japan was still busily engaged in a singular variety of fields, in all of which she was exhibiting almost as much passionate energy and thoroughness as if each of these individually were her sole existing care.

Let us briefly glance at these preoccupations, and attempt to realise the extraordinary force of character, and the wealth of national resources, which enabled a country to superadd such

interests to the work of keeping nearly 500,000 splendidly equipped soldiers in constant contact with a brave and vigorous enemy. Incidentally, it is an instructive, if by no means pleasant, reflection that when, during the war in South Africa, we had to keep not much more than 250,000 men in the field, our own War Office found the strain altogether excessive, and confusion, if not something worse, occurred in regard to supplies and stores, the bare recollection of which is painful. But Japan not only found no difficulty in supplying and reinforcing with marvellous precision and completeness her five armies; she was fully prepared for extended military efforts, and in due course, when the temporary risks and embarrassments created by the approach of the Third Russian Pacific Squadron were removed, we shall see further developments of the land campaign in Sakhalin and in the neighbourhood of Vladivostok. All these will indicate that while Tokio was celebrating with banners and paper lanterns the great Mukden victory, the Japanese General Staff was working out quietly and unostentatiously the details of movements entirely unconnected with those of the armies now pressing northwards towards Harbin.


A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COURT OF KOREA

At the close of Vol. II. (Chapter LXXXIV.) some details were given of the stage reached by Japanese railway enterprise in Korea by the end of 1904. To these it is now convenient to add some important information contributed to the *Times* in April, 1905, by its famous Peking correspondent, who gives a very remarkable account of progress in other directions besides railway construction. As to the existing lines, Dr. Morrison observes that the Seoul-Fusan railway was already paying expenses, that the trestle-bridges on the Seoul-Ya-lu line were to be changed into permanent structures, that a branch was under construction to Ma-san-po, and another trunk line from Seoul to Gen-san and the Tumen River was about to be commenced. Simultaneously, extensive reclamation of land and harbour improvements were in progress at Che-mul-po and Fusan, and the work of lighthouse construction was being vigorously pushed on by the Customs. "Most noticeable," says Dr. Morrison, "are the order and quiet attending the Japanese enterprises. Order is preserved with the smallest possible

evidence of force, the mere handful of *gendarmerie* policing the railway contrasting strangely with the large bodies of frontier guards which Russia needed to protect the railways in Manchuria, where the people were set at enmity by the harsh treatment from which they suffered."



Photo : Copyright, 1905, H. C. White & Co.
JAPANESE SOLDIERS CUTTING CORD WOOD AND MAKING CHARCOAL IN COLD MANCHURIA.

After recording the reduction of the worthless Korean Army to a Palace Guard of 1,500, and the substitution of a Japanese *gendarmerie* for the Korean Police, the *Times* correspondent goes on to say: "Never has the capital known such immunity from crime, and it is intended to extend the system to the country, where, away from the railways, frequent lawlessness is reported. Japan now controls all the communications of Korea with the outside world. She has by agreement taken charge of the posts and telegraphs, she has secured the right to fish in the territorial waters round the whole coast of the Empire, and she has

obtained the opening of the inland and coast waters to the navigation of Japanese vessels under rules which are an improvement on those in force in China. The Nagamori scheme for the reclamation of waste lands, which is now in abeyance, is certain, with modifications, to be adopted later. In conclusion I may remark that the value of British goods imported into Korea in 1904, apart from Japanese Government stores, was £700,000."

It is not surprising that these improvements were not regarded as unmixed blessings by the Korean Emperor and his corrupt court, nor by the so-called "foreign advisers" of the Korean Government, most of whom had now left, or were on the point of leaving, the country, their places being taken by Japanese.

But, apart from the annihilation of such "vested interests," the virtual protectorate assumed by Japan was having the best possible results for the country and the people. Not only was the conduct of the Japanese troops exemplary, but liberal payment was being made for everything, and never before had the Koreans earned such wages. "Civilian Japanese," adds the correspondent significantly, "are pouring into the country, coming largely by families. It is estimated that already 60,000 have come, and they are arriving daily. There is practically an uninterrupted chain of Japanese settlements from Fusan in the south to the Yalu in the north."

In the Liao-tung Peninsula, Japan was busily engaged in turning to her own uses Port Arthur and Dalny. In the harbour of the latter there was a mass of hard work yet to be accomplished in attempting to salve such of the sunken Russian warships as could possibly be induced to float. For many miles, too, the sea was still far from safe by reason of the Russian mines. Writing at the end of January, 1905, a correspondent had recorded the raising of nearly 400 of these engines of destruction, adding, "There remain so many that weeks, if not months, of labour will still be required to remove the peril completely." It may, then, be safely assumed that the Japanese at Port Arthur at the time the Battle of Mukden was won had still plenty to keep their hands and minds occupied.

With five large armies at work in Manchuria, and an expedition to Sakhalin in preparation; with Togo's Fleet refitting so as to be in pink of fighting condition when the collision with Rozhdestvensky's Squadron should take place; with large sums being expended in Korea and Port Arthur—with all these costly sources of anxiety, Japan might well, at this stage, have experienced some financial embarrassment. But, thanks to her unbroken record of success in the present war, and thanks, not a little, too, to the evident goodness of her home government and to the admirable condition of her domestic affairs, her credit remained excellent, and had she asked England and America for twice as much as the 30 millions she now actually borrowed, the loan would have been taken up with eager alacrity. Indeed, it is difficult to say what amount she could not have raised after the Battle of Mukden, so convinced was, at any rate, the British and American public that not even Rozhdestvensky's Squadron had the least chance of impairing Japan's capacity to fulfil the most serious obligations. But the Mikado's financial advisers acted with admirable restraint, and neither at home nor abroad was there the slightest indication of extravagance, or of any wish to test the full extent of the national credit.

From Japan, victorious, multifariously active, financially secure, and happy, moreover, in the harmony of her political parties and the support of a united people, it is not pleasant to turn to Russia at this painful crisis. For an appreciable interval after even the occupation of Tie-ling the Russian public was, as usual, only partially aware of the extent of the disaster suffered by the army in Manchuria. But the official classes began almost immediately to realise the situation, and to realise it all the more clearly in that they alone knew the actualities of Russia's internal troubles. In several quarters there was now observable a far deeper despondency, coupled with much more plain-speaking, than had marked the receipt of news of previous defeats or reverses. Even in high circles there was talk of a searching inquiry into all the circumstances connected with Kuropatkin's discomfiture. On the other hand, the most pessimistic views were entertained as to the eventual effect of the defeat upon the provinces, where the revolutionary propaganda was very active, and public opinion was becoming greatly inflamed by the half-measures of the Government in regard to constitutional reform. As to the Tsar, we have already seen that that magnanimous autocrat's first generous impulse after the Battle of Mukden was to degrade the gallant soldier who had fought a losing game, by no means without honour, and had at least saved the greater portion of his army from annihilation. In the annals of civilised nations there are not many instances of Imperial ingratitude recorded more sickening than the Tsar's treatment of Kuropatkin after the Battle of Mukden. But the painful spectacle of this mighty ruler begging first one and then another of his generals on the stay-at-home establishment to go out and supplant one who at least had borne the heat and burden of a long year of war, is one which may be usefully dismissed, in view of the graver and more practical embarrassments of Russia at this moment.

Casualties, as has been more than once urged in this history, are almost invariably misleading as a gauge of disaster, and financial losses to a country so constituted as Russia may mean very much less than they would to a State of even greater resources. But the Battle of Mukden brought certain solid facts in both these connections into a very strong light, with the result that at the end of March, 1905, the St. Petersburg correspondent of the Paris *Matin* thought fit to present his readers with a very striking estimate of the Russian losses in men and money during the past 14 months. Even taking the official figures as accurate, there had been a total of 162,100 men killed, wounded, or taken prisoners in the engagements preceding the Battle of Mukden. At the latter the same correspondent very reasonably reckoned that 175,000 were killed or placed *hors de combat*. "This, added to the 7,000 sick per month, makes an approximate general total of 435,000.

"As for the expenses, 900,000,000 roubles (£90,000,000) is given as the cost of the Manchurian Railway with the keeping up the line, the losses caused by the Chunchuses, the construction of the city and port of Dalny, the organisation of the maritime service in connection with the railway, and the item of Port Arthur. War expenses and foreign loans amount to 570,000,000 roubles (£57,000,000), State securities 150,000,000 roubles (£15,000,000), the loss of 1,480 guns

10,000,000 roubles (£1,000,000), confiscation of merchantmen 10,000,000 roubles (£1,000,000), and the loss of the Fleet 160,000,000 roubles (£16,000,000). Thus, including the recent internal loan, the war has cost, so far, two milliards of roubles (£200,000,000)."

It goes without saying that the seriousness of these figures was not confined to the actual injury inflicted upon Russia's population or her own internal revenues. A specially grave question for the Tsar's Government was the view which foreign investors would take of a situation that, after making every sort of allowance for Russia's immense resources, could only be regarded as extremely unsatisfactory. For some time past there had been much uneasiness in France, which before and since the announcement of the alliance with Russia had lent the latter many millions of pounds. It was naturally felt that the security on which these past loans had been granted would be endangered if Russia continued to wage war, even with some success, since the prosecution of such a campaign as that in the Far East must mean a grievous dislocation of national industry and commerce. But the position of Russia's French creditors would become actually alarming if the "friendly and allied nation" went on spending money like water, not only without gaining any substantial advantage over her adversary, but also to the accompaniment of heavy and repeated losses.

This latter view received striking exemplification shortly after the Battle of Mukden. Russian agents were sent to France to test the feelings of French financiers on the subject of a new loan, and, to the extreme discomfiture of the Tsar and his Government, were met by a steady refusal to advance another centime until Russia signed a treaty of peace. Here, indeed, was a slap in the face for Russia, almost as severe as the loss of Mukden itself. Nor was it found possible to induce the French financial world to reconsider its decision. No peace, no more francs, was the last word, and much chagrined and a little humiliated, the Russian Government tided over its immediate difficulties by issuing an internal loan of £20,000,000 at 90. Even in regard to this doubtful accommodation a certain amount of arrangement was necessary, only half the amount being subscribed by the banks, the remainder being negotiated by the Savings Bank under a law permitting the substitution of Government securities for available cash deposits.

While on this subject of Russia's war finance a note may be made of an interesting interlude in connection with some pointed questions, which began to be asked about this time, as to the reality of Russia's gold reserve. In reference to one such question, in which it was asked to what extent the Russian Government could draw on its gold reserve without impairing the credit of the State, the Russian Minister of Finance took a curious step. He telegraphed to the *Times*, suggesting that the Editor of that journal should come to St. Petersburg in order to see and verify personally the gold reserve kept in the vaults of the State Bank! The Editor of the *Times* courteously declined to undertake the proposed financial investigation, on the ground that it hardly came within the province of a newspaper. The invitation was subsequently extended to other editors, one or two of whom sent representatives, who were duly dazzled with a sight of 65 millions in gold in the vaults



From Stereograph Copyright, 1905, by Underwood & Underwood, London and New York.

JAPANESE COOKING STATION. NAVAL GUNS IN BACKGROUND.

of the Imperial Bank of Russia. Presumably the object of the Russian Minister of Finance was attained by this publicity, and a few holders of Russian bonds may have slept more soundly for a few nights after learning that the gold reserve in question had not been tampered with. But, of course, financiers were well aware that Russia had borrowed these 60 millions several times over from France alone, and their existence was no sort of valid argument for lending further money to a country which had spent treble the amount of its gold reserve in one year of war, and would probably be called upon to pay nearly as much again by way of indemnity if it now asked for peace.

This last allusion brings us to the final consideration with which it is proposed to deal in this necessarily discursive chapter. We have already dealt with the effects of the Battle of Mukden successively upon foreign opinion, upon the future conduct of warfare, upon the military, domestic, and financial condition of both belligerents. It now remains to discuss coherently these diverse and very varying effects, with a view to examining the prospect of peace, either as the immediate and direct, or as the indirect and eventual, outcome of the great battle in question. As we shall see, the verdict of the Tsar and his advisers was for a continuance of the war, and there will always be some to maintain that, this being the case, the Battle of Mukden brought the end of the hostilities substantially no nearer than did the taking of Port Arthur or the Battle of Liao-yang. The greater part of this chapter has been an attempted refutation of any such proposition. Had it been possible or instructive to do so, the same process of analysis and comprehensive comparison would have been adopted by the present writer in the case of previous Japanese successes. But, as a matter of fact, it was not until we saw Kuropatkin's badly broken army squeezed out of Mukden and driven past Tie-ling, that the end of the war came even dimly into sight. The Mukden battle was not the last phase, but it was contributory to the end, and it was so in a sense quite outside the application of that epithet to any previous Russian reverse.

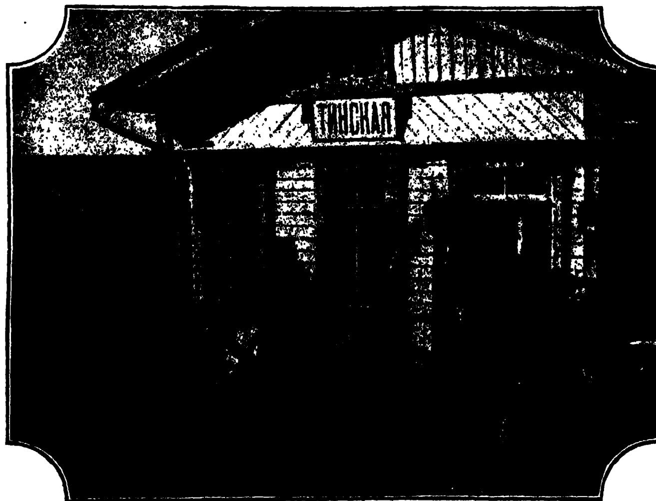
In conclusion, the question "Ought there to have been peace after Mukden?" demands brief investigation from the historical standpoint. Without any "passionate partiality" for Russia and her methods, the writer strongly holds the view that at this stage, at any rate, she was clearly justified in going full steam ahead, notwithstanding the injuries she had received in her recent collision. Even on land she was not yet decisively beaten, or anything like it. As an obvious matter of fact, every mile she had retired since Liao-yang increased the length of her enemy's line of communications and decreased the length of her own. A point might soon be reached when, Harbin having become the main Russian centre, and Vladivostok being isolated, a Russian army could be fed and reinforced perhaps even more effectively than the Japanese army immediately menacing it. In the meantime, there were still large forces in the field, and "Papa" Liniévitch might prove to have infinitely better luck and judgment than poor Kuropatkin. Even supposing that there had been no chance of "getting even" with Japan on the sea, the Russians might well prefer to make yet another effort on land in preference to making overtures for peace.

For the peace alternative was growing

more and more alarming by reason of the continuous character of the Japanese successes. The chances that the Japanese would demand not only a big indemnity, but also a cession of territory, were now beginning to crystallise into a certainty. However willing France might be to lend more money in order to bring about peace, the handing over of the borrowed millions to a victorious Japan, together with a slice of Russian territory, would not only be a bitter humiliation for Imperial Russia, but might produce the gravest domestic results. For a public which, like the dying Hampden, "ingeminates 'Peace!'" is sometimes apt, when called upon to pay the price, to turn and rend those who have carried out its noisy wishes. Internally Russia was already in a pretty bad way. What she might be when she realised that peace meant lasting humiliation and a heavy increase to taxation, was not pleasant to contemplate.

Above all, there was a chance, perhaps not a very substantial one, but still a chance, that the Third Pacific Squadron would do something really great towards helping Russia out of her present plight. Even if it only succeeded in disabling some of Japan's battleships, and in geting through to Vladivostok, a success would be gained which, with the fresh and bitter lessons of Port Arthur in their minds, there were still Russian admirals capable of turning to good advantage.

Is it then to be wondered at that Russia after Mukden repudiated with some vigour the suggestion that she should now come to terms with the enemy? The end may have shown her to be wrong, but it is not safe to assume even this while we are ignorant of what terms Japan would have proposed, having regard to the fact that Russia still possessed a Navy to be reckoned with. But, looking at the known facts as they were at the latter end of March, it may safely be said that for Russia to have sued for peace as the direct consequence of the Battle of Mukden would have exposed her to many risks which not even her losses, necessities, and existing embarrassments, severe as all three were, would have justified her in running.



A WAYSIDE STATION ON THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY.
(From Foster Fraser's "The Real Siberia.")

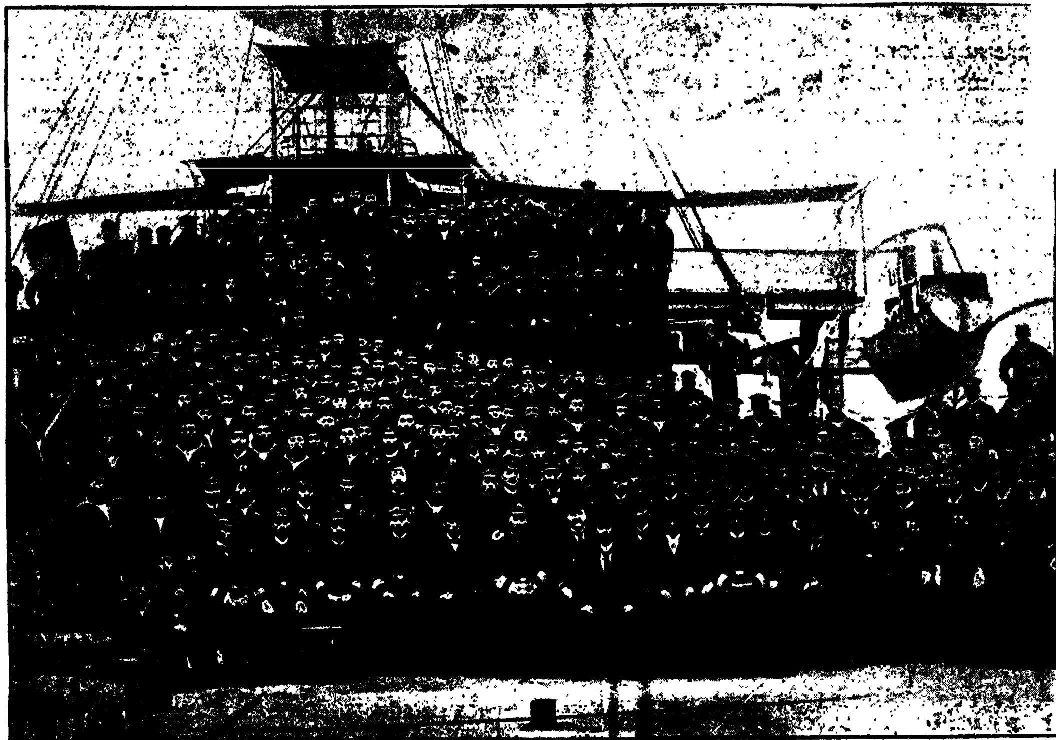


Photo. West & Son, Southsea.

CRREW OF JAPANESE BATTLESHIP *SHIKISHIMA*.

CHAPTER XCV.

THE BALTIC FLEET—NEARING THE GOAL—INTERNATIONAL SUSPENSE—A DOUBTFUL PROSPECT—JAPANESE NAVAL PREPARATIONS—TOGO ON THE WATCH—RECKONING THE CHANCES.

WE parted from Admiral Rozhdestvensky and the Baltic Fleet at the close of Chapter LXXXV. (pp. 18 and 19 of the present volume), having followed his movements along the Cochin China coast until about the middle of May. On the 14th of that month he at last left Honkohe Bay, having previously effected a junction with the Third Squadron under Admiral Niebogatoff. There ensued a fortnight of anxious suspense, such as only at extremely rare intervals occurs to keep the nations of the world in a fever of restless expectation. For every day, every hour of that fortnight was fraught with lurid chances. As long as Admiral Rozhdestvensky shielded himself behind the colonial petticoats of La Belle France there was, in any case, little risk that Admiral Togo would attack him. Even assuming that France had given Japan to understand that she would not regard such an act as unfriendly to herself, there would have been the grave objection that the Russian ships, if damaged, could have found easy shelter in



JAPAN'S GREAT MAN OF ACTION AT SEA: ADMIRAL TOGO ON HIS BRIDGE IN HEAVY WEATHER.

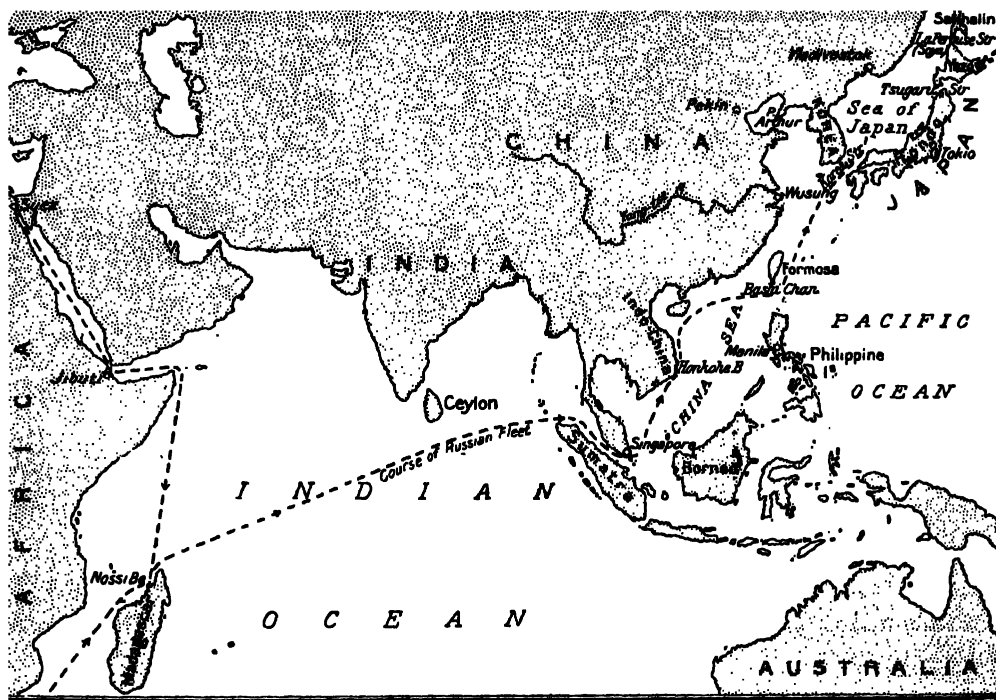
French ports, in which, again, their mere internment would hardly have suited the Japanese purpose.

But, from the moment Admiral Rozhdestvensky was known finally to have left Honkohe Bay, it was evident that a collision might conceivably take place at any moment. In any case it could not long be deferred for more than a week or two without placing the Russians in a position of extraordinary embarrassment and humiliation. On the other hand, Togo might think fit to attack, at any rate, with torpedo craft, almost at any instant, in order to lessen the possibility that by some sea chance his enemy might elude him, and reach Vladivostok comparatively uninjured. Well then might the onlookers watch, with impatient eagerness for news, the passage of that long and truly momentous fortnight. Nor was the suspense rendered less wearying by the fact that the situation remained day after day unillumined by a ray of news worth mentioning about the actual movements of the opposing fleets. From Japan, of course, there came no glint of information regarding Togo's whereabouts. But Admiral Rozhdestvensky, too, must be credited with the caution he evidently exercised in the matter of keeping his movements dark, at any rate to the longing eyes of Europe. In such circumstances the inevitable occured. An enterprising American agency at Manila cabled a report of an engagement to the south of Formosa, resulting in a Russian victory. It is significant that even in St. Petersburg this report was received with considerable scepticism, notwithstanding a semi-official intimation that a battle was imminent. According to Admiral Avellan, Rozhdestvensky was absolutely determined to fight before making finally for Vladivostok, and would even force Togo to do so, if necessary, by bombarding Japanese ports. But it was felt, nevertheless, to be doubtful whether Admiral Togo would have gone so far from his base with his battle fleet, and it was concluded that the engagement, if not entirely mythical, had been but a minor affair.

It subsequently transpired that, on leaving Honkohe Bay, Admiral Rozhdestvensky took a step which of itself rendered the chances of an immediate collision extremely doubtful. So far he had not been called upon to make any choice of routes since leaving Madagascar. His only preoccupation had been to get his ships and men into good fighting trim after the voyage across the Indian Ocean, and to effect a junction with the Third Squadron under Niebogatoff. Both these objects he had most skilfully, if somewhat unscrupulously, accomplished by making free use of the French ports on the coast of Indo-China. Incidentally, it is interesting to observe that, notwithstanding some bitter feeling created by France's doubtful observance of neutrality obligations, the Japanese expressed unstinted admiration of the qualities which enabled Admiral Rozhdestvensky to perform this feat, and to sail away from Honkohe Bay with all his units in fighting condition after bringing them all the way from the Baltic to the China Sea.

But the time had now come for the Russian Commander to think of something else besides filling his coal bunkers and cleaning his ships' bottoms. There now lay before him a double choice of routes involving, it is needless to say, issues of the extremest gravity. His only goal could be Vladivostok, and to reach this he would ultimately have to make his way through one of three avenues—the Tsu-Shima Strait, between Southern

Korea and South-western Japan; the Tsugaru Strait, between Japan proper and the northern island of Yezo; and the Soya Strait, between Yezo and Sakhalin Island. As we shall see later, his choice in this matter had fallen upon the Tsu-Shima Strait, and his reason for making it will be discussed in connection with steer northwards towards the Tsu-Shima Strait. The former course had the double disadvantage that it might expose the Russian Fleet to attack from torpedo-craft lurking in the Formosan harbours, and would also betray the Russian Admiral's evident intention to make for Vladivostok by the Tsu-Shima route. Ac-



MAP ILLUSTRATING ROZHDESTVENSKY'S VOYAGE FROM HIS LONG HALTING PLACE OFF MADAGASCAR TO THE SEA OF JAPAN.

Admiral Togo's preparations. But even to get to Tsu-Shima Strait from Honkohe Bay there were two routes open, and between these Admiral Rozhdestvensky had now forthwith to decide.

A glance at the map will show that it was open to the Russian ships either to pass up the channel between Formosa and the Chinese mainland, or to sail out into the Pacific between Formosa and the Philippine Islands, and subsequently to steer northwards towards the Tsu-Shima Strait.

cordingly, Rozhdestvensky steamed out into the Pacific through one of the channels which separate Formosa and the Philippines, and, beyond the knowledge that he had made a brief halt in these straits for coaling purposes about May 19th, no authentic news of any portion of his fleet reached the outside world until May 25th.

On that day there appeared off Wusung, at the mouth of the Yang-tse

River, a heterogeneous collection of ships which, on examination, proved to be the non-combatant portion of the Russian Fleet—colliers, victualling ships, converted cruisers, and special service steamers—now finally discarded as a preliminary to the probable battle to be fought before reaching Vladivostok. It is not surprising that the arrival of this mixed mob in the Yang-tse should have "created a profound sensation and evoked many bewildered conjectures." But the Tokio correspondent of the *Times*—whose exhaustive and luminous account of all these naval operations is the standard authority on the subject—says that for Japanese naval officers the incident had nothing perplexing. He adds an explanation and some supplementary intelligence, which can only be quoted verbatim :—"They read it as a plain intimation that Rozhdestvensky intended to put his fate to the test at Tsu-Shima, since, had it been his purpose to make for Tsugaru or Soya, he must have retained the services of these auxiliary ships during several days longer. It is apparent, indeed, that the Russian Admiral here made his first cardinal mistake: he should have kept his non-combatant vessels out of sight as long as possible.



RUSSIAN REPAIRING SHIP *KAMCHATKA.*

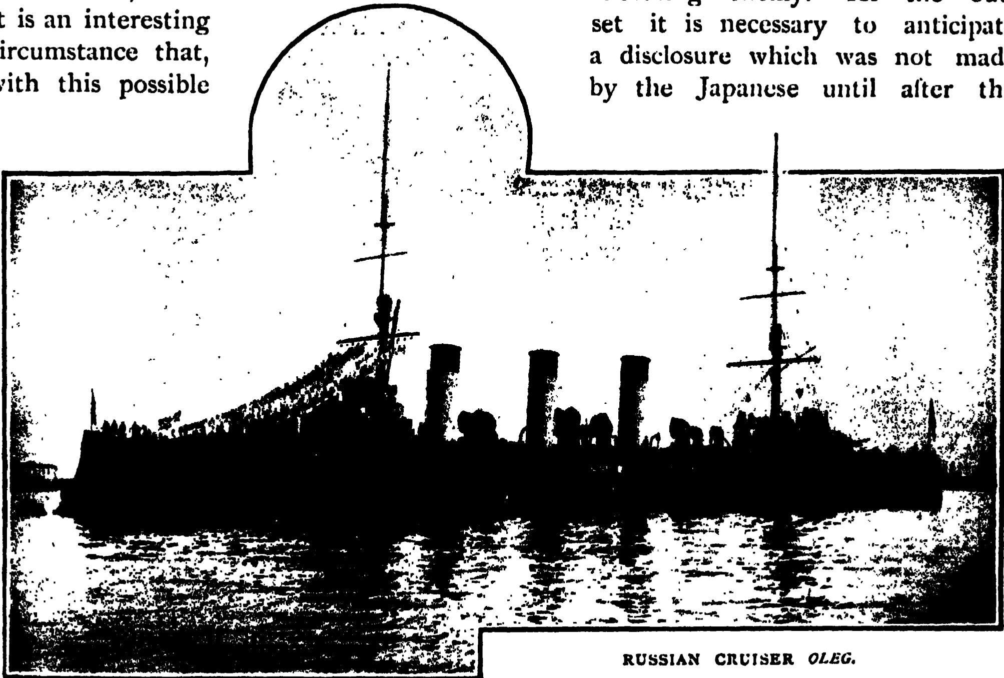
Their absence from the arena would have been a mysterious element, whereas their apparition, especially as a segregated squadron in the Yang-tse River, furnished an unerring clue to expert observers.

"This want of judgment becomes the more singular in the context of an adroit attempt which Rozhdestvensky certainly did make to mislead the enemy. A Norwegian steamer, consigned to a Japanese firm and bound for Japan, was visited by Russian cruisers near the Bashi Strait, and after brief detention was released, with information that the Baltic Fleet might be expected at Tsu-Shima in a few days. Rozhdestvensky knew that this intelligence would precede him to Japan, and he argued that, since the Japanese could not possibly credit him with sincerity in such a matter, they must interpret the news in an opposite sense. Further, to colour the deception, he

slowed down, so that the Japanese, who knew the exact distance he had to travel from the point of the Norwegian steamer's release to Tsu-Shima, and knew also the average speed at which he had hitherto travelled, might construe his non-appearance in due time as a proof that he had steered elsewhere. In point of fact this incident did cause some anxiety."

It may be questioned whether at this critical stage there was any real confidence in Russia itself as to the result of Admiral Rozhdestvensky's efforts. Probably the utmost looked for by even sanguine experts at St. Petersburg was that a remnant of the Baltic Fleet would reach Vladivostok, and it is an interesting circumstance that, with this possible end in view, Admiral Birileff, the Commander-in-Chief at Kronstadt, had been within the past few days appointed Commander-in-Chief at Vladivostok. The theory evidently was that Admiral Rozhdestvensky, despite the brilliant services he had rendered, was not a very strong pillar to lean upon, and that, even if he retained sufficient nerve and physical capacity to conduct a fleet action, his subsequent breakdown was more or less assured. Such a presage was hardly indicative of great confidence, and public apprehension in Russia must have been further aroused by openly expressed naval doubts and fears as to the exposure of Rozhdestvensky's battleships to repeated torpedo attacks and to danger from mines.

We may now usefully leave the Russian Fleet, and turn temporarily to the Japanese preparations for meeting the oncoming enemy. At the outset it is necessary to anticipate a disclosure which was not made by the Japanese until after the great battle — a disclosure which incidentally necessitates a correction in a previous page of this history. When the crowning conflict between the fleets of Russia and Japan had been decided,



RUSSIAN CRUISER *OLEG.*

the Navy Department at Tokio made the announcement that, in addition to the loss of the great battleship *Hatsuse* (Vol. I., p. 273) and other recorded mishaps, the battleship *Yashima* and several smaller vessels were also lost irretrievably to Japan during 1904. The total list is as follows:—The *Yashima* was sunk by a mine on May 15th while blockading Port Arthur. The destroyer *Akatsuki* met a similar fate on May 17th. The gunboat *Oshima* sank after a collision, while co-operating with the army off the Liao-tung Peninsula on May 17th. The destroyer *Hayatori* was sunk by a mine on September 3rd, while blockading Port Arthur. The gunboat *Atago* struck a rock and sank before Port Arthur on November 6th. Finally, the cruiser *Takasago* was sunk by a mine while blockading Port Arthur on December 12th.

That the Japanese should have succeeded in keeping dark all these losses is one of the most extraordinary facts in the naval history of the world. It is true that doubts had been expressed during 1905 as to the continued existence of the *Yashima*, and several experts did not reckon her in their calculations as to the fleet which Togo would bring into action against Rozhdestvensky. But no one imagined that this splendid vessel had gone to the bottom apparently on the very same day that witnessed the sinking of the *Hatsuse* and *Yoshino*. In this connection it will be recalled that the writer, on page 25 of Volume II., mentioned the *Yashima* as taking part in the naval action of August 10th, an error which was inevitable, and must now be considered as hereby corrected.

The remaining losses chronicled above were not serious, but a sentimental interest is attached to that of the *Hayatori*, one of the two destroyers which attacked the Russian Fleet at night in Port Arthur at the commencement of the war, as described in Chapter V.

One can understand the terrible sinking feeling experienced by the Japanese Government on learning that Togo's battle fleet had been reduced not by one, but two battleships, a third of its total strength in that all-important class; and still more easy is it to comprehend the necessity for keeping the double loss, if possible, secret. For, if it had been known, there is little doubt that the Russians would have handled the fleet in Port Arthur with far greater boldness, and thus, perhaps, have put an altogether different complexion upon the war. Still more serious would have been the outlook for Japan if Russia, determined to crush her adversary by sheer weight of metal, had at a comparatively early stage sent out her Baltic Fleet to reinforce the Port Arthur Squadron. In such an event Togo's four battleships would have stood little chance, notwithstanding their individual quality, and the good shooting and seamanship of their crews. The Russian preponderance would have been in the ratio of three to one, and, unless the Russian ships had been shamefully mishandled, the result could hardly have been any but a fatal one for the Island Nation. Such an object lesson in the value of secrecy in regard to naval losses in the early stages of a great war is not likely to be lost sight of by European nations; but at the same time it will be understood that only very rarely can such a loss as that suffered by Japan in the sinking of *Yashima* take place in circumstances which render concealment possible, however strict the censorship, however patriotic and obedient the bereaved relatives of those who have gone down with the ill-fated ship or ships.

Even now that the Port Arthur squadron had been satisfactorily accounted for, and there was only Admiral Rozhdestvensky's fleet to deal with—for there was no need to anticipate any trouble from the patched-up ships at Vladivostok—the fact that the Japanese had only four battleships to oppose to Rozhdestvensky's seven was a serious one. But it will be remembered that the two armoured cruisers, the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga*, which Japan had bought from the Argentine Government at the commencement of the war, had already been tried by Togo in conjunction with his battleships, and had come quite satisfactorily out of that test. We shall enter more particularly into the relative strength of the two opposing fleets later on, but this allusion to the former Argentine cruisers is useful as showing the curious chances which sometimes govern naval supremacy. When these two ships were bought, Japanese naval officers expressed the opinion that they were not needed for the execution of the Japanese naval plans, but had merely been bought to prevent their acquisition by Russia. In the event, it may safely be assumed that Japan thankfully regarded the possession of these two fine ships as very necessary indeed to the accomplishment of her naval designs, and that, if she had not made the purchase, would gladly have paid double the price had it been possible to secure them at the end of that terrible week in May in which the two battleships *Hatsuse* and *Yashima*, the cruiser *Yoshino*, the gunboat *Oshima*, and the destroyer *Akatsuki* went to the bottom. Incidentally, too, the purchase by Great Britain of the two vessels originally built for another South American Republic, and subsequently entered in our Navy as the *Triumph* and the *Swiftsure*, destroyed Russia's chance of acquiring at a critical moment a reinforcement which conceivably might have made a serious difference in the eventual outcome of the naval campaign.

But, before we proceed to "count heads," it is necessary to dwell upon another and almost more important feature of the naval situation as it affected more particularly Japan. It was of the utmost consequence for Togo to bring Rozhdestvensky to a fight before the latter could reach Vladivostok, for the obvious reason that, with the magnificent harbour of the latter at their back, the Russians would be not much worse off as regards refitting and repairs than the Japanese themselves. But, as we have already seen, not only had the Russians, up to the last possible moment, availed themselves of the friendly shelter of the French coasts of Indo-China, but on leaving the latter they had the choice of three distinct routes by which to make for Vladivostok. It was clearly out of the question for Togo, with the limited force at his disposal, to attempt to block all these three avenues of approach. It became necessary, then, to make a forecast of Rozhdestvensky's probable line of action, and to take steps in accordance with that forecast—a delicate and risky process.

As has already been explained, Rozhdestvensky decided upon the route through the Tsu-Shima Strait. It may now be added that this decision was anticipated by Togo on very sound grounds. The Soya route would involve a lengthy voyage, would add fresh complications to the coaling question, and involve much risk from mines and torpedo attacks. The Tsugaru Strait would be equally objectionable to the Russians by reason of the mines with which it was supposed to be strewn, and the passage was a long

and intricate one, especially in the season of fogs. Accordingly, Togo came to the conclusion that his antagonist would seek to pass the Tsu-Shima Strait, and he made all arrangements to meet him at the entrance and force him to a decisive battle.

The first step needful was to fix upon a suitable base, one which could be kept so secret that no system of espionage would reveal its whereabouts to the Russians, and thus induce them to take some other route. We learn from the Tokio correspondent of the *Times*—to whom the writer's indebtedness is almost beyond the reach of adequate acknowledgment—that the base fixed upon was Chin-hai Bay, in Southern Korea. Almost as wonderful as the secrecy which surrounded the loss of the *Yashima* was the fact that, although thousands of Japanese must have known the whereabouts of the battle fleet during a period of several months, the outside world was kept entirely in the dark. "The Russians, it is true," remarks the *Times* correspondent, "were so circumstanced that they could not employ scouts or make reconnaissances. They had to rely on spies solely. Yet, when it is remembered of what vast value any certain information would have been, how many accredited agents Russia had in Chinese ports, how many adventurers were willing to work for her money, and how many friends she had among the foreign communities in Japan, and even in the foreign Legation in Tokio, it is indeed wonderful that Togo's ships were able to lie so long *perdu*."

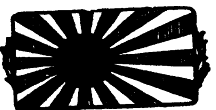
The next step was to institute a thoroughly practical system of reconnaissance and naval intelligence, such as would enable Togo to sally forth from his hiding-place at the right moment, and bar the Tsu-Shima Strait to his powerful adversary. This was accomplished by the Japanese with their usual skill and thoroughness. The whole of the sea from the Island of Quelpart, which lies to the south of the south-west corner of Korea, right away to Vladivostok, was parcelled out in squares like those of a chess-board, and the Japanese scouts were instructed on sighting a Russian ship to report by wireless telegraphy the number of the square in which the enemy had appeared.

As a matter of course, Togo's fast cruisers had for some months past been watching Rozhdestvensky's progress, and probably, since the arrival of the Russians at Singapore to the date of their departure from Honkohe Bay, scarcely a day had passed without the receipt at headquarters of some message or other indicating the enemy's whereabouts and performances. But from the time Rozhdestvensky passed out into the Pacific, and more especially since the arrival of his colliers and other hangers-on at Wusung, continuous observation and report by cruisers became difficult and dangerous, if not impossible.

After May 25th the situation became tense in the extreme for the watching Japanese. All they had to go upon was the news brought by the Norwegian steamer mentioned some time back, to the effect that the Russian Fleet would arrive in the Tsu-Shima Strait in a few days' time, and this information was quite likely to prove deceptive. According to ordinary calculations, Rozhdestvensky should have reached Tsu-Shima Strait, assuming this to be his selected route, by the 25th. But, as we have seen, he purposely slowed down, and so not only the 25th, but the 26th also, passed without any report to Togo of the enemy's arrival upon the Japanese marine chessboard.

ADMIRAL TOGO'S FLEET AND FLAGSHIP LYING IN WAITING OFF TSUSHIMA ISLAND.

Scouts coming in to report the advance of the Russian Fleet. Admiral Togo's modifications have made his flagship, the "Mikasa," seen on the left of the picture, a very different-looking vessel from what she was at the beginning of the war (cf. p. 140).



Among the numerous pictures illustrating scenes and incidents of naval warfare which are to be found in the art galleries of the world, there is a fair sprinkling in which great admirals are shown at critical periods in the course of some notable struggle for supremacy at sea. To these it may well be hoped that a great artist may be found in due course to add his conception of the scene on board Admiral Togo's flagship, the *Mikasa*, in the very early morning of May 27th, 1905. The mere writer in such a case labours under many disadvantages, not the least of which is that he has little or no chance of indicating in cold print some detail of environment to which the artist would lend force and life by a few strokes of colour. He may, then, be excused for passing lightly over the land- and sea-scape involved with the crude observation that the morning in question was a foggy one, and so not calculated to enhance the doubtful picturesqueness of a small Korean bay. It is when we come to the central object in the scene, the great flagship, that one feels that a mere suggestion of actuality is sufficient to set the feeblest imagination working.

Half-a-dozen separate pictures present themselves at once. The blue-jackets going cheerily about their morning work; the officers exchanging speculations whether to-day will bring the long-wished-for happening; the huge ship herself prepared for battle; the engine-room with its staff ready these thirty-six hours for instant movement; Togo, maybe in his cabin, poring for the hundredth time over his chequer-ruled charts and, for all his impassive features, consumed by anxiety lest his calculations should have been falsified; and, lastly, the signallers awaiting at the wireless installation the first indication of the enemy's approach.

These are some details of what may have been the scene in Chin-hai Bay at 5 a.m. on May 27th, when the "wireless" instrument began working, and a few moments later the fateful message was borne to the Admiral from one of the guardships stationed in the sea to the south: "Enemy's squadron sighted in No. 203 section. He seems to be steering for the East Channel." As the *Times* correspondent observes, it was a strange and suggestive coincidence that the Baltic Fleet should have thus been sighted in a section numbered with a figure surrounded by such stirring associations. The capture of 203 Metre Hill paved the way for the capture of Port Arthur. The recurrence of 203 at this tremendous juncture was surely a lucky omen of success.

The message clearly showed that a portion of the Russian Fleet was making, not for the immediate neighbourhood of Chin-hai Bay, which lies to the northwest of Tsu-Shima itself, but for the passage between the island and south-western Japan. But as yet it was questionable whether the ships sighted might not be a minor force intended to throw Togo off the scent. "Not until nearly noon was this all-important question answered definitely. Admiral Togo then knew that the full fighting force of the two Baltic squadrons was entering the East Channel of Tsu-Shima, and that the danger of a mere diversion need no longer be apprehended. It is worth noting that when he telegraphed the fact to Tokio a feeling of profound thankfulness at once pervaded official circles. That the two fleets should meet fairly and squarely seemed a matter of congratulation to men so confident of the result as were the Japanese."

It is established from the Japanese official account of the battle that the

fighting squadrons proceeded at once, on receipt of the first "wireless" message announcing the appearance of the enemy in No 203 section, to the spot appointed for assembly previous to attack. This was the Island of Oki, some 150 miles from Chin-hai Bay. The following paragraph of the official report describes the proceedings immediately subsequent to the arrival of the first message at 5 a.m. :—

"The whole crews of our fleet leaped to their posts; the ships weighed at once, and each squadron proceeding in order to its appointed place, made its dispositions to receive the enemy. At 7 a.m. the guard-ship on the left wing of the inner line, the *Izumi*, reported :—'The enemy's ships are in sight. He has already reached a point twenty-five nautical miles to the north-west of Uku-jima; he is advancing north-east.' The Togo (Captain Togo Masamichi) section, the Dewa section, and the cruiser squadron (which was under the direct command of Vice-Admiral Kataoka) came into touch with the enemy from 10 to 11 a.m. between Iki and Tsu-Shima, and thereafter as far as the neighbourhood of Okino-shima (Oki Island) these ships, though fired on from time to time by the enemy, successfully kept in constant touch with him, and conveyed by telegraph accurate and frequent reports of his state.

"Thus, though a heavy fog covered the sea, making it impossible to observe anything at a distance of over five miles, all the conditions of the enemy were as clear to us, who were thirty or forty miles distant, as though they had been under our very eyes. Long before we came in sight of him we knew that his fighting force comprised the Second and Third Baltic Squadrons, that he had seven special service ships with him, that he was marshalled in two columns line ahead, that his strongest vessels were at the head of the right column, that his special service craft followed in the rear, that his speed was about twelve knots, and that he was still advancing to the north-east."

It is highly important to bear in mind these details of the preliminary proceedings, if only for the reason that they illustrate in the most clear and striking fashion the initial advantage possessed by a fleet which has spared no effort to get and keep in touch with the enemy from the earliest possible moment. A remarkable, if unavoidable, contrast is here presented by the position of the Russian Fleet, which was not only in complete ignorance of the enemy's whereabouts, but was liable to constant bewilderment through either mistaking the enemy's scouts for units of one or other of the battle squadrons, or through imagining that the main naval strength of Japan was not assembled in this neighbourhood. A particularly luminous and interesting idea of the puzzling conditions under which Rozhdestvensky entered the Tsu-Shima Strait is given by the following statement by the Tokio correspondent of the *Times*, who evidently had eminent and expert Japanese assistance to enable him to give such important details :—

"As for Rozhdestvensky, what he saw as he sailed up the East Channel of Tsu-Shima was the frequent apparition of Japanese vessels on his starboard bow, but what their fitful presence portended he had no means of clearly ascertaining. His fleet was not preceded by vedettes, and, judging only by such glimpses as the fog allowed him to obtain of his enemy's manœuvres, he formed the not unnatural conclusion that whatever attack was to be apprehended would come from the

north-east. He knew that he was under observation. Since 5 o'clock in the morning the disturbance of his telegraphic indicators had told him that the Japanese were conversing about him. But there was no discernible indication that their main force was in the neighbourhood. On the contrary, everything went to indicate the truth of information received by Rozhdestvensky while still in Indo-Chinese waters—namely, that the Japanese had divided their strength, posting the bulk of it on the northern avenues of Tsugaru and Soya, and leaving only a secondary section to watch Tsu-Shima.

"The ships he sighted through the fog were all of inferior quality. Among them was the obsolete battleship *Chinyen*, a vessel twenty-one years old, captured from the Chinese in 1895 and no longer capable of steaming more than twelve and a half knots. The *Chinyen* had cost the Japanese some anxious moments in the days when their own fleet did not possess so much as one armoured cruiser; but she was no longer fit to take her place in the first fighting line, and to have included her in it would have been on Togo's part a mistake analogous to that made by Rozhdestvensky when he marshalled in his ranks side by side with the *Borodino* and her mates such vessels as the *Nikolai I.*, the *Dmitri Donskoi* and the *Vladimir Monomakh*. One very useful function the old battleship could discharge, however: she might show herself to the Russians among the protected cruisers hanging on their starboard bows, and she might send a few shells in their direction from her 12-in. Krupp guns, thus confirming Rozhdestvensky's impression that he had only second-class material to deal with."

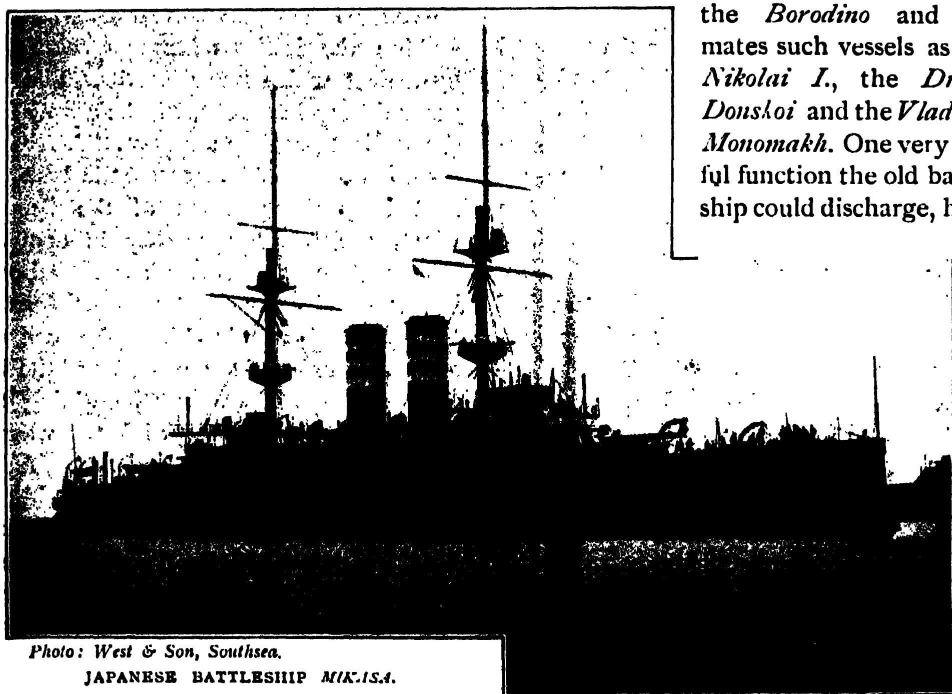
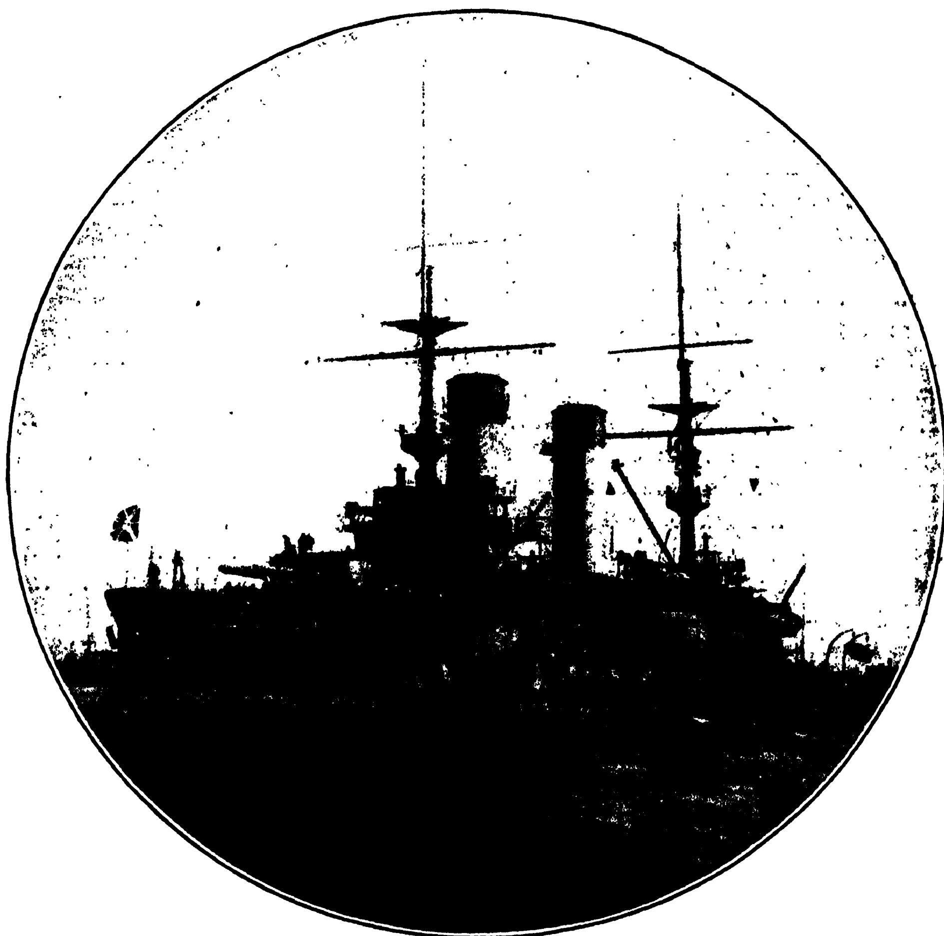


Photo: West & Son, Southsea.
JAPANESE BATTLESHIP *MIKASA*.

On the strength of this impression, and more particularly in the expectation that, as these ships were all hanging on the starboard bows of his own fleet, he would soon be attacked from the north-east,

Rozhdestvensky made the dispositions already foreshadowed in the extract from the Japanese official account of the battle. The details and effect of these dispositions will be dealt with later when we come to the actual opening of the fight. But once more the importance of sound information is emphasised, this time by the fact that the absence of it led to a tactical blunder at the outset on the part of the combatant, whose very large and very mixed force rendered the most trivial error of this sort peculiarly serious.

We have now brought both the Japanese and Russian fleets into contact, and all but into collision. At this point it becomes essential to make a detailed comparison between the two forces engaged in this tremendous and thrilling conflict. For the purpose a quantity of material is available, and the process of comparison is rendered the more satisfactory and instructive by the fact that it is necessarily complete—at any rate, as far as the main points are concerned. In that respect the chronicler of a naval operation



RUSSIAN BATTLESHIP *BORODINO.*

has the advantage of him who records great land battles, in which it sometimes occurs that whole divisions confidently supposed, and sometimes even reported, to have been engaged, have been far removed from the actual scene of the fighting, and may hardly have seen a shot fired during the whole engagement. It is happily impossible to "mislay" a battleship or a big cruiser in this fashion—at any rate, when a fleet action at sea becomes decisive. We may take it, then, that the following carefully-compiled account includes every ship of any claim to consideration which took part in what the Japanese have elected to call the Battle of the Sea of Japan.

It will be understood that the above remarks must not be taken too literally as applying to every sort of craft which was present, and at one time or another burnt powder in the battle. It will be seen, for instance, that there is a little haziness as to the precise composition of the Japanese protected cruiser squadron; but the detail is not of importance, as protected cruisers are of small account where armoured ships are engaged, and in this case the actual result of their intervention was quite insignificant.

Taking the Russians first, we find Admiral Rozhdestvensky's total fighting force comprising eight so-called battleships, three sea-going coast-defence ironclads, three armoured cruisers, and six protected cruisers, as under:—

BATTLESHIPS.

Kniaz Suvaroff.—Flagship of Admiral Rozhdestvensky. Displacement, 13,516 tons. Speed, 18 knots. Completed in 1904. Armour, a complete Krupp steel belt 9 in. amidships, tapering to 4 in. at ends. Armament, four 12 in. guns, twelve 6 in.; and light and machine guns. Six torpedo tubes, two of them submerged. Complement, 740.

Imperator Alexander III.—Sister ship of *Kniaz Suvaroff.* Completed in 1904.

Borodino.—Sister ship of *Kniaz Suvaroff.* Completed in 1904.

Orel.—Sister ship of *Kniaz Suvaroff*, but with only four torpedo tubes. Completed in 1904.

Ossliabya.—Flagship of Rear-Admiral Fölkersahm. Displacement, 12,674 tons. Speed, 18 knots (nominally). Completed in 1901. Armour, a "Harveyed" steel belt 9 in. amidships, tapering to 6 in. 30 ft. from bow and stern. Armament, four 10 in., eleven 6 in., and light and machine guns. Six torpedo tubes. Complement, 732.

Sissoi Veliky.—Displacement, 8,880 tons. Completed in 1894. Speed, 16 knots. Armour, partial compound 11·8 in. to 15·7 in. belt, 247 ft. long, 7 ft. deep. Main armament, four 12 in., six 6 in. Six torpedo tubes. Complement, 550.

Navarin.—Displacement, 10,206 tons. Completed in 1895. Speed, 16 knots. Armour, partial belt, 14 in. to 16 in. Main armament, four 12 in., eight 6 in. Six torpedo tubes. Complement, 550.

Imperator Nikolai I.—Flagship of Rear-Admiral Niebogatoff. Displacement, 9,672 tons. Completed in 1892. Speed, 14·8 knots. Armour, complete composite belt, 6 in. to 14 in. Main armament, two 12 in., four 9 in., and eight 6 in. Six torpedo tubes. Complement, 604.

COAST-DEFENCE SHIPS.

General Admiral Apraxin.—Sea-going coast-defence iron-clad, 4,126 tons. Completed in 1898. Speed, 15 knots. Armour, Harvey steel belt 10 in. to 7-8 in. for 176 ft. Main armament, three

10 in., four 6 in. Four torpedo tubes. Complement, 318.

Admiral Seniavine.—Sea-going coast-defence iron-clad, 4,648 tons. Completed in 1895. Speed, 16 knots. Armour, Harvey steel belt as in *Apraxin.* Main armament, four 9 in., four 6 in. Four torpedo tubes. Complement, 318.

Admiral Oushakoff.—Sister ship of *Admiral Seniavine.*

ARMOURED CRUISERS.

Admiral Nakimoff.—8,524 tons. Completed in 1888, re-constructed in 1900. Speed, 16·7 knots. Armour, complete compound belt, 10 in. to 6 in. Main armament, eight 8 in. and ten 6 in. Four torpedo tubes. Complement, 567.

Dmitri Donskoi.—6,200 tons. Completed in 1885, reconstructed in 1896. Armour, complete 7 in. belt. Armament, six 6 in., ten 4·7 in. Four torpedo tubes. Complement, 510.

Vladimir Monomach.—5,593 tons. Completed in 1885, re-armed in 1898. Speed, 15 knots. Armour, complete compound belt 10 in. to 6 in. Main armament, five 8 in., twelve 6 in. Two torpedo tubes. Complement, 550.

In addition to the above, the Russians had six protected cruisers, the *Oleg* (flag of Rear-Admiral Enquist), *Izumrud*, *Jemchug*, *Svetlana*, *Aurora*, and *Almaz.* Of these the *Oleg* and *Aurora* were of nearly 7,000 tons, and armed with 6 in. guns, the former a 1904 ship with a speed of 23 knots, having twelve of these weapons, the latter eight. The remainder were of from 3,000 to nearly 4,000 tons displacement, and armed with 4·7 in. guns, except the *Svetlana*, which carried Canet guns of 5·9 in. calibre.

There were, further, with the Russian Fleet on May 27th, nine destroyers, one converted cruiser (*Ural*); six special service steamers or transports (*Kamchatka*, *Iltis*, *Anastney*, *Russi*, *Korea*, and *Sveri*); and two hospital ships, *Orel* and *Kastroma.*

An abstract of the foregoing shows that the Russian ships carried twenty-six 12 in. guns, seven 10 in., twelve 9 in., thirteen 8 in., and 141 6 in. On this point a naval expert, writing before the battle, remarked that, at the long ranges at which naval actions are usually fought, the heavier guns, especially the 12 in., have a better chance of hitting the object than the 6 in. The 6 in., on the other hand, can be fired oftener, and, though its percentage of hits at long range is considerably below the percentage of the 12 in. gun, greater frequency of firing makes up in absolute number for a relatively fair percentage. The effect of a blow on a ship from a 6 in. projectile is, of course, less than that from a 12 in., but, if the results of the naval action of August 10th were taken as a guide, the difference of effect is not so considerable as might be looked for. It will be particularly interesting hereafter to note the extent to which this statement, founded on the best up-to-date knowledge, was verified—or the reverse—in the Battle of the Sea of Japan. In the meantime, the fact that the Russians, as will be seen, went into action with considerably more guns of large calibre than their opponents, could not but be regarded as an important point in their favour, more especially as sixteen of their 12 in. guns were carried on battleships of the newest type of construction.

Turning to the Japanese, we find the first line of fighting ships composed of four battleships and eight armoured cruisers. Two of the latter, however, the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga*, must, for the purposes of the battle, be regarded as

small battleships, being actually included in the battleship division. The following is a detailed list:—

BATTLESHIPS.

Mikasa.—Flagship of Admiral Togo. Displacement, 15,200 tons. Completed in 1902. Speed, 18·5 knots. Armour, 9 in. to 4 in. Krupp steel. Armament, four 12 in., fourteen 6 in., and light and machine guns. Four submerged torpedo tubes. Complement, 795.

Shikishima.—Battleship, 14,850 tons. Completed in 1899. Speed, 19 knots. Armour, Harveyed nickel steel belt 9 in. to 4 in. Main armament, four 12 in., fourteen 6 in. Five torpedo tubes (four submerged). Complement, 810.

Asahi.—Sister ship of *Shikishima.*

Fuji.—Battleship, 12,320 tons. Completed in 1897. Speed, 18·5 knots. Armour, partial Harveyed belt 14 in. to 18 in. Main armament, four 12 in., ten 6 in. Five torpedo tubes (four submerged). Complement, 600.

ARMOURED CRUISERS.

Nisshin.—Flagship of Vice-Admiral Misu. Displacement, 7,294 tons. Completed in 1904. Speed, 20 knots. Armour, complete belt of 6 in. Krupp steel. Main armament, four 8 in. and fourteen 6 in. Four submerged torpedo tubes. Complement, 500.

Kasuga.—Displacement, 7,294 tons. Completed in 1904. Speed, armour, torpedo tubes, and complement as *Nisshin.* Armament, one 10 in., two 8 in., fourteen 6 in.

Idzumo.—Flagship of Vice-Admiral Kamimura, 9,750 tons. Completed in 1901. Speed, 22 knots. Armour, complete Krupp steel belt 7 in. to 3½ in. Main armament, four 8 in. and fourteen 6 in. Four submerged torpedo tubes. Complement, 500.

Iwate.—Sister ship of *Idzumo.*

Adzuma.—Displacement, 9,436 tons. Completed in 1901. Speed, 21 knots. Armour, complete belt 7 in. to 3½ in. Harvey nickel steel. Main armament, four 8 in., twelve 6 in. Five torpedo tubes (four submerged). Complement, 500.

Asama.—Displacement, 9,700 tons. Completed in 1899. Speed, 22·1 knots. Armour, torpedo tubes, and complement as in *Adzuma.* Main armament, four 8 in., fourteen 6 in.

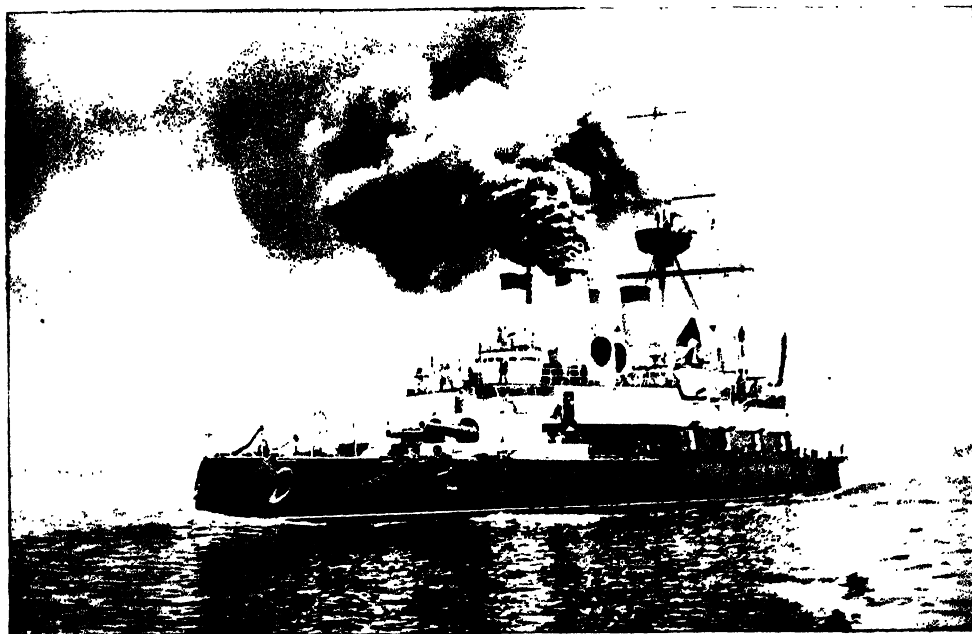
Tokiwa.—Sister ship of *Asama.*

Yakumo.—Displacement, 9,850 tons. Completed in 1901. Speed, 21 knots. Armour, complete belt 7 in. to 3½ in. of Harvey nickel and Krupp steel. Main armament, four 8 in., twelve 6 in. Five torpedo tubes (four submerged). Complement, 498.

In addition to the above, Admiral Togo had at his disposal the old battleship *Chinyen*, which carried four 12 in. and four 6 in. guns, and an uncertain number of protected cruisers, the squadron of the latter being divided into three sections, one under command of Rear-Admiral Dewa, whose flag was flown in the *Kasagi* (4,784 tons, 22·7 knots, armed with two 8 in. and ten 4·7 in.); another under command of Rear-Admiral Uriu, flying his flag in the *Naniwa* (3,727 tons, 18·7 knots, eight 6 in. guns); and a third section under command of Captain Togo. In destroyers and torpedo-boats the Japanese were extremely strong, disposing of five sections of each. Admiral Togo had also within easy call an uncertain number of special service ships.

Owing to the dubiety as to the number of Japanese cruisers in action, it is impossible to classify the guns on this side with exactitude. But, putting aside the *Chinyen*, the approximate total was

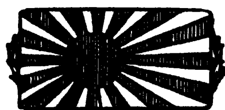




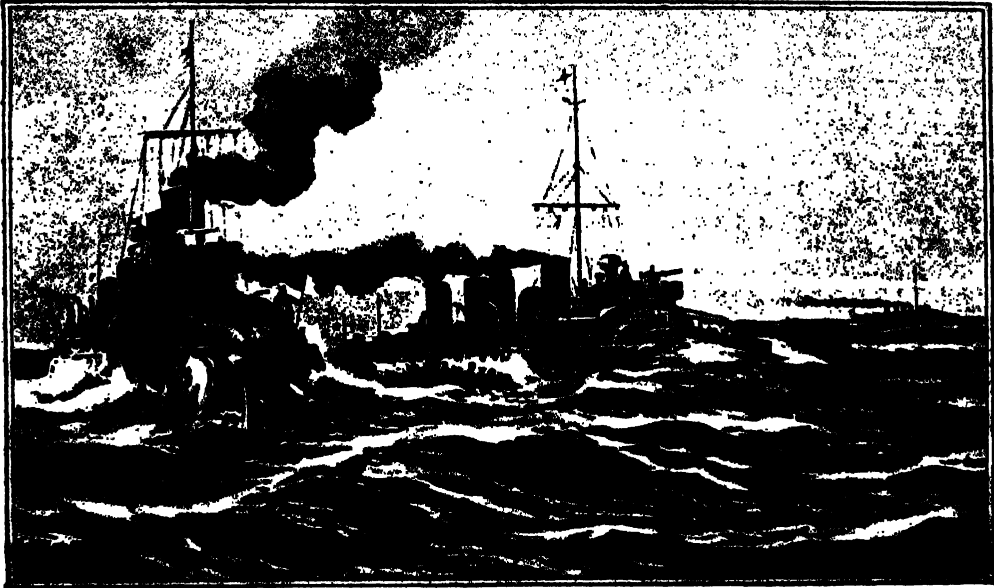
sixteen 12 in., one 10 in., thirty 8 in., and one hundred and sixty 6 in.

In estimating the technical chances in favour of either combatant at the commencement of the battle, the three most serious considerations may, perhaps, be reckoned to be: first, the number, size, and battle-worthiness of the armoured ships; second, gun-power; and third, speed. Having dealt sufficiently closely with the two first, we may pass to the very important question of speed, as to which Admiral Rozhdestvensky deliberately imposed a serious limitation upon himself by keeping all his ships together at the outset. This necessitated movement throughout at a rate of 12 knots only, while the whole of Togo's main squadron of four battleships and eight armoured cruisers manœuvred easily at from 14 to 16 knots. As the *Times* correspondent at Tokio observes, the difference between 12 knots and 14 or 15 does not appear much at first sight, but its practical significance is at once apparent if one fleet be supposed to be at rest, and the other moving at from two to three knots. "The latter can evidently place itself as it pleases, and choose whatever range suits it with regard to the former." At the same time—and this is a point which the authority quoted does not indicate—it is necessary, where the margin of speed is so small, to make very few mistakes, and to keep in the closest possible touch with the enemy. If a ship moving at 12 knots gets an appreciable start, it takes one moving at 14 a weary, long time to overtake the fugitive.

It does not seem expedient—at any rate, at this juncture—to expatiate upon the relative moral advantages or disadvantages of the two opposing forces. But attention must be drawn to the fact that now, for the first time, Admiral Togo could take into action the battle fleet of Japan without exercising that extreme caution as to keeping at long range which had hitherto characterised his tactics. There was now practically no chance that—at any rate, for many months—a fresh Russian fleet could make its way out from Europe. Accordingly, the Nelson of Japan was now free to emulate the dash of his great British predecessor, and the practical certainty that he would turn this freedom to the fullest possible advantage lent to the opening of this Twentieth Century Trafalgar a curiously sharp and exciting significance.







THE SURRENDER OF ADMIRAL ROZHDESTVENSKY.

CHAPTER XCVI.

BATTLE OF THE SEA OF JAPAN—DISPOSITIONS OF THE FLEETS—TOGO'S SIGNAL—THE FIGHT COMMENCES—BATTLESHIPS IN ACTION—CRUISER ENGAGEMENT—TORPEDO OPERATIONS —FIGHTING RESUMED—ROZHDESTVENSKY A PRISONER—A DECISIVE VICTORY.

IT is about half-past one in the afternoon of May 27th when the Russian Fleet under Admiral Rozhdestvensky first realises that it is in the presence of the main battle squadron of Japan. The fog has lifted somewhat, but there is a heavy sea, which tells more against the mixed assortment of Russian ships fully laden with coal and stores and ammunition than against their trim adversaries. The former are steaming at about twelve knots only in two parallel columns "line ahead." In expectation of an attack from the east or north-east, Admiral Rozhdestvensky has formed his four newest battleships into a right column, the flagship *Kniaz Suvaroff* leading, and the *Alexander III.*, *Borodino*, and *Orel* following in the order named. The left column consists of four sections. Of these the first, led by Rear-Admiral Fölkersahm, consists of the battleships *Ossliabya*, *Sissoi Veliky*, and *Navarin*, and the armoured cruiser *Admiral Nakimoff*. The second, led by Rear-Admiral Niebogatoff, consists of the battleship *Nikolai I.* and the coast-defence ships *Apraxin*, *Seniavine*, and *Oushakoff*. The third, commanded by Rear-Admiral Enquist, is a protected cruiser squadron including the *Oleg*, *Aurora*, *Svetlana*, and *Almaz*, the remaining two vessels of this class, the *Jemchug* and *Izumrud*, being employed between the two columns as scouts. The rear of the left column is brought up by a fourth section comprising the six special service steamers and one converted cruiser, which are led

by the armoured cruisers *Dmitri Donskoi* and *Vladimir Monomakh.* On the approach of the Japanese main squadron from the west, Admiral Rozhdestvensky sheers off a little to the east, as though to attempt a parallel course, but can only effect this to a limited extent, partly through fear of exposing his weak sections in rear, and partly because, without an immediate change of formation, the fire of his right column would soon be masked. Thus, before a shot has been fired in the actual battle, the unfortunate Russian Admiral's mistaken anticipation of an attack from an easterly quarter has placed him at a disadvantage. Indeed, a Japanese officer who took part in the battle, Commander Akiyama, afterwards insists that this initial blunder of a double column line ahead formation coloured the whole fight, and that, the moment they saw that it had been adopted, the Japanese regarded the victory as assured.

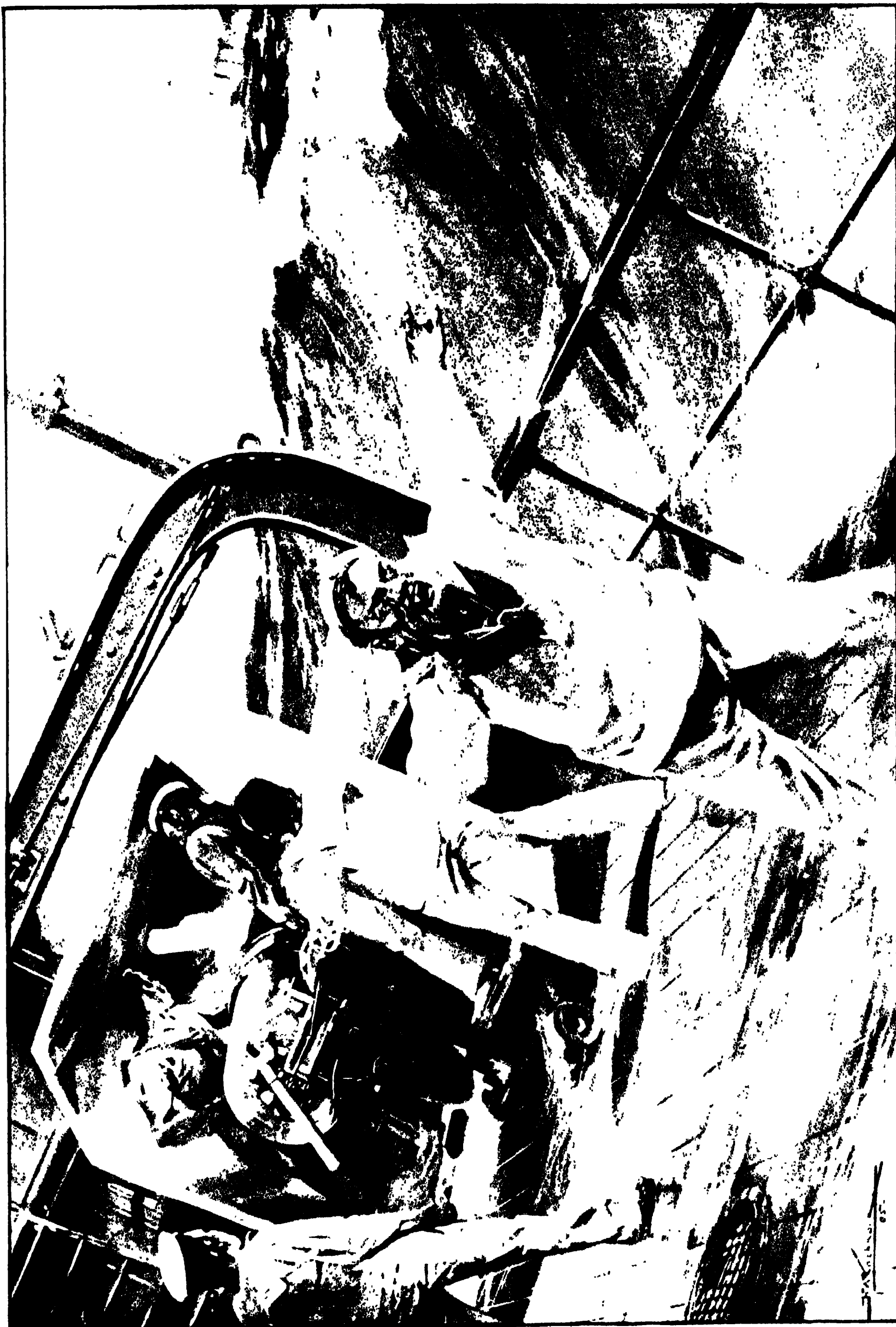
Admiral Togo's arrangements for the coming conflict are simple in the extreme. He himself, of course, leads the battleships in the *Mikasa*, which is followed by the *Shikishima*, *Fuji*, and *Asahi*, and the armoured cruisers *Kasuga* and *Nisshin* in the order named. Then come the six armoured cruisers — *Idzumo*, *Iwate*, *Yakumo*, *Adzuma*, *Asama*, and *Tokiwa;* and with these twelve ships the Japanese Admiral proceeds to engage the eight battleships, three armoured cruisers, and three coast-defence ironclads of Russia's Baltic Fleet. For his protected cruisers have already received orders to steer south in order to attack the enemy's weak rear.

Admiral Togo, on sighting the Russian Fleet, gives the order for all his ships to go into action, and at 1.55 p.m. the following signal is run up on the *Mikasa* :— "The fate of the Empire depends upon this event. Let every man do his utmost!"

The Japanese main squadron now heads south-west, making as though it would cross the enemy's course at right angles; but at 2·5 it suddenly turns east, and, followed by the armoured cruiser squadron, the whole in single column line ahead, bears down diagonally on the head of the enemy's column.

At 2.8 a puff of smoke breaks from the bows of the *Kniaz Suvaroff*. The Russians have opened fire at about 9,000 yards, and the battle has begun. The Japanese at first make no reply, but silently close in until the distance is lessened by a third, their ships in the meantime, painted a shade of olive green, affording no very good mark for the Russian gunners.

Coming within 6,000 yards' range, the Japanese Fleet opens a tremendous fire on the leading ships of the two Russian columns, the *Ossliabya* and *Kniaz Suvaroff* bearing the brunt of this first terrible cannonade. Subsequently the *Times* correspondent informs us that at once it became apparent that the Russian gunners were completely outclassed. "Careful observations indicated that in the opening stage of the fight the Japanese scored three hits for every one made by the enemy, and very soon the ratio reached four to one. It was noted that the Japanese bluejackets remained perfectly cool throughout. Scarcely any recourse was had to the buckets of drinking water placed within their reach. Absolute confidence of victory pervaded all ranks, the fighting had become a mere pastime to these veterans, and their enthusiasm was still further roused by the splendid skill of their Admiral in carrying his squadrons over scores of miles



towards an invisible enemy, so as to meet him at exactly the right spot on this waste of waters. Only sailors could fully appreciate that feat."

By the time the Japanese ships have crossed the Russians' bows the rain of their shells has already caused grave disaster. The *Ossliabya* is leaking badly; the *Kniaz Suvaroff* fails to answer her helm. Both battleships are in flames, and have to leave the line, but the *Kniaz Suvaroff* continues to keep up a vigorous fire. The determination and deadly effectiveness of the Japanese attack force the Russians still more to the south-east, and the two Russian columns simultaneously change their course by degrees to the east, thus, according to Admiral Togo's official report, falling into irregular columns line ahead, and moving parallel to the Japanese. But the superior speed of Togo's ships continues to give them the advantage, and the *Imperator Alexander III.*, badly hit and bursting into flames, follows the *Ossliabya* and *Kniaz Suvaroff* temporarily into retirement.

Unable to shake their tormentors off, the Russians have now changed their formation into single column line ahead, and have also changed their direction from east to west. For a short space the two fleets are steaming in opposite directions.

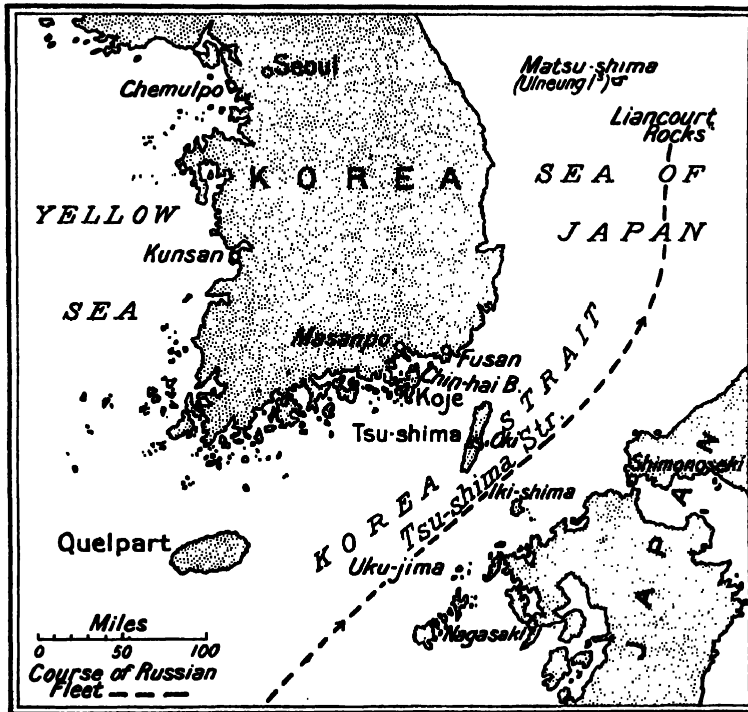
Putting about and increasing his speed, Togo seeks once more to head off the Russians to the west, and, in the course of the curve taken by the long Russian line in changing direction, the whole of Rozhdestvensky's armoured vessels become exposed to a cross fire from Togo's battleships and armoured cruiser squadrons. For the latter have fallen, according to the *Times* account, "into a L-shaped formation, the battleships pouring their fire on the Russians from the north, the armoured cruisers from the east."

It is now 2.45. Several of the Russian ships besides the three above mentioned have caught fire, and the smoke combining with the fog has so much obscured the Russian line, that for a time the main Japanese squadrons cease firing. But, as Admiral Togo remarks in his official report, the result of the battle has been decided in the past forty minutes. Two at least of Russia's best battleships are out of action, and several other of her ships have been sadly knocked about. Admiral Rozhdestvensky himself has been wounded on board the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, and is transferred later with his staff to the destroyer *Buini*. Admiral Fölkersahm has been killed in the conning-tower of the *Ossliabya*.

The Japanese have not, of course, escaped all injury. Three of the *Kasuga's* guns have been put out of action, and the great armoured cruiser *Asama* has been struck by three shells in the stern near the water-line, her steering gear has been injured, and she is leaking so badly that she has to leave the fighting line. But the handy and indefatigable Japanese bluejackets and engineers rapidly effect temporary repairs, and the *Asama* soon resumes her place.

It is reported subsequently that during the hottest exchange of fire Admiral Togo has had a narrow escape. A shell struck the third step of the *Mikasa's* bridge ladder and burst. "One of the splinters," writes Reuter's correspondent at Tokio, "struck and broke the iron cover of the compass, smashing it and sending a piece of the iron against Admiral Togo's right thigh as he was standing taking observations with his glass. Captain Ijichi saw the fragment strike the Admiral and hastily ran towards him, but only to find

him still completely absorbed in taking observations, and apparently unaware of what had occurred. A closer examination showed that Admiral Togo was totally unhurt. The piece of iron that hit him, which was the size of the palm of one's hand, was found near him. Captain Ijichi carefully pocketed it and, returning to his post, went on fighting." Japan may well count that bit of iron as one of her most honoured national relics.



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE GENERAL COURSE TAKEN BY THE RUSSIAN FLEET DURING THE BATTLE.

In the *Nisshin*, again, the veteran Vice-Admiral Misu has been slightly wounded.

Between 2.45 and 3 p.m. the Japanese main squadron, forcing the enemy in a southerly direction, fires on him, to use Admiral Togo's own quaint phraseology, "in a leisurely manner," whenever his ships can be discerned through the smoke and fog. At 3 p.m. the Japanese are in front of the enemy's line, and are shaping a south-easterly course, when the Russians suddenly head north, and seem about to pass northward by the rear of the Japanese line. Accordingly, the main Japanese squadron at once goes about to port, and, with the *Nisshin* leading, steers to the north-west. The armoured cruiser squadron under Kamimura, also following in the main squadron's wake, changes front, and again the enemy is forced southwards by a heavy fire.

At 3.7 the Russian protected cruiser *Jemchug* comes up to the rear of the Japanese armoured cruiser squadron, and is

severely damaged. Three minutes later the battleship *Ossliabya*, which has been listing heavily owing to the inrush of water, turns turtle and disappears, "the first battleship sent to the bottom by gunfire alone." The *Kniaz Suvaroff*, too, has become more and more unmanageable. One of her masts has gone, and two of her smoke-stacks, and the whole ship is enveloped in smoke and flames.

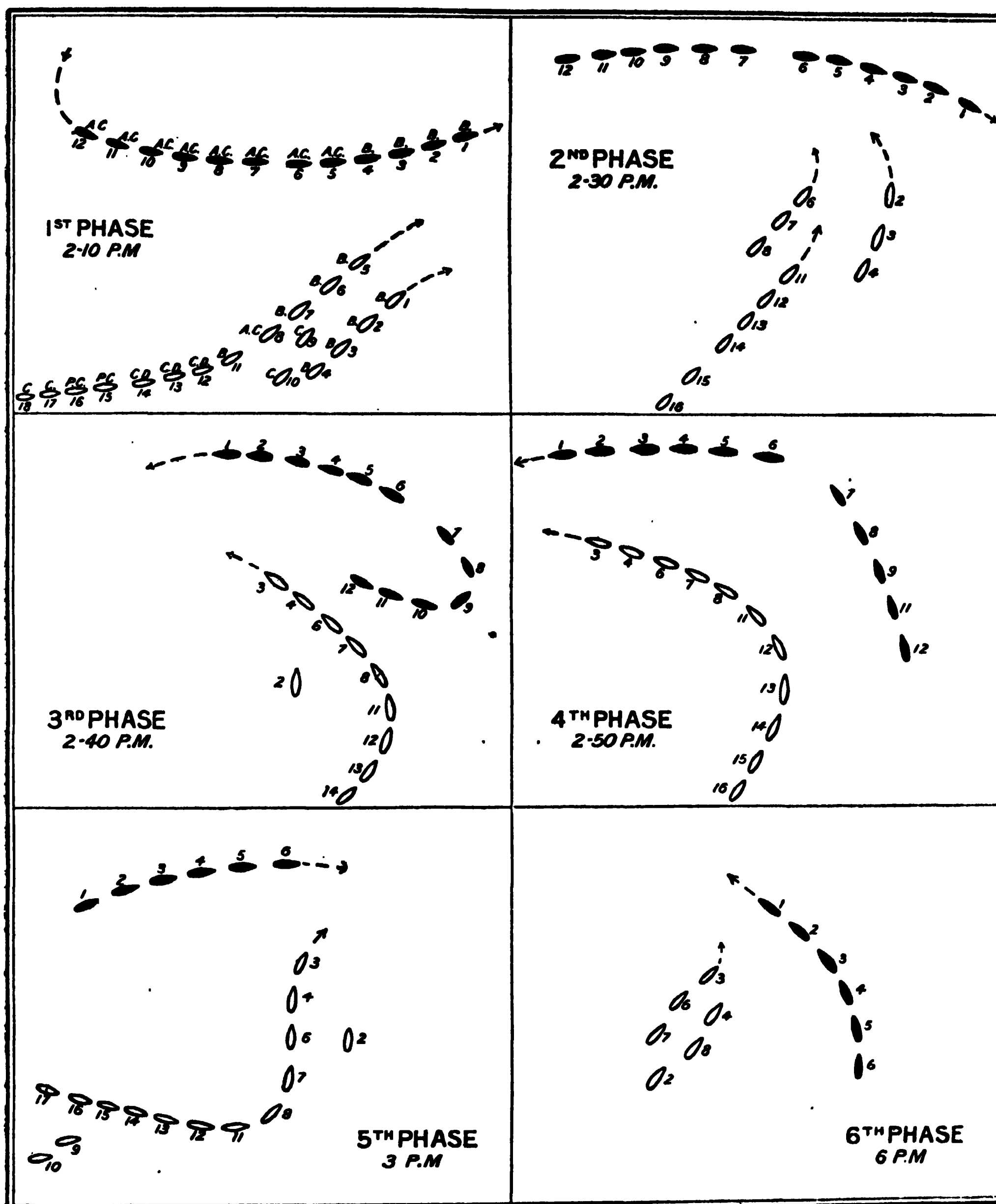
What is left of the Russian fighting line, suffering heavily, now change their course to the east, the Japanese pursuing, firing repeatedly, and also discharging torpedoes whenever an opportunity occurs. Until 4.45 p.m., says Admiral Togo, there is no special change in the condition of the principal fight. The enemy is constantly pressed south, and the firing continues.

Meanwhile, the *Kniaz Suvaroff's* end has been drawing near. Hitherto most of the damage done in the action has been wrought by the Japanese guns, which have been the more effective owing to the heavy sea. For rolling in the latter, the hulls of the Russian ships below the water-line have been disclosed, and not only have good targets thus been presented, but the shells have often, as in the case of the *Ossliabya*, had particularly deadly results. For the destruction of the crippled *Kniaz Suvaroff*, however, the torpedo is clearly the fitting agent. Accordingly, at 3.40 a destroyer section led by Captain Hirose approaches the doomed vessel, and discharges torpedoes at her, but with no clear result. On the other hand, one of the Japanese destroyers, the *Shiranui*, is hit by a shell from one of the Russian cruisers in the neighbourhood, and only escapes with difficulty. The Hirose section retires, and is followed an hour later by that under the command of Captain Suzuki. The *Asashio* of this section gets, like the *Shiranui*, into difficulties; but another destroyer contrives to hit the *Suvaroff* with a torpedo on the port side astern, and it is evident that she is hopelessly crippled. As Admiral Togo makes special mention of these destroyer attacks, we may be very certain that they were characterised by particular dash and gallantry.

The end of the *Kniaz Suvaroff* is a lingering one. For more than two hours she remains wallowing unmanageably, but with one small gun astern still worked by her gallant crew. One of the latter, by the way, tells subsequently a shameful story of officers who, during the action, completely lost their heads and, when they saw the ship was doomed, held back the men while they themselves escaped to the boats.

At 7.20 p.m. a third destroyer section attacks the *Kniaz Suvaroff*. The *Murasame*, approaching within a hundred yards, discharges an 18 in. torpedo at her. The crew are seen clustering round the one remaining mast. The fierce little *Murasame* comes in yet closer, and another torpedo strikes the sinking battleship, this time abaft the engine-room. It is the *Suvaroff's* death-blow. Her stern rises from the water, hangs for a moment in the air, and down goes all that remains of what a few hours back was one of the finest of the world's fighting ships.

At 4.40 the Russians, the command of whom has devolved upon Admiral Niebogatoff, apparently abandon their attempt to seek an avenue of escape northward, and turn south, pursued by the Japanese. They are soon hidden by the fog, and at 5.30 Admiral Togo realises that they have cleverly turned on their tracks, and that he himself has for some time been steaming in the wrong direction. There is yet time to repair the mistake, and,



RUSSIAN VESSELS ⬭ JAPANESE VESSELS ⬬

B. Battleships. A.C. Armoured Cruisers. C.D. Coast Defence Ironclads P.C. Protected Cruisers C Cruisers

SKETCH PLANS SHOWING HOW TOGO OUT-MANŒUVRED ROZHDESTVENSKY AT EVERY STAGE OF THE BATTLE.

JAPANESE SHIPS.

1 *Mikasa.*
2 *Shikishima*
3 *Fuji.*
4 *Asahi.*
5 *Kasuga.*
6 *Nisshin.*
7 *Idzumo.*
8 *Iwate.*
9 *Yakumo.*
10 *Adzuma*
11 *Asama*
12 *Tokiwa.*

RUSSIAN SHIPS.

1 *Kniaz Suvaroff.*
2 *Imperator Alexander III.*
3 *Borodino.*
4 *Orel.*
5 *Ossliabya.*
6 *Sissoi Veliky.*
7 *Navarin.*
8 *Admiral Nakimoff.*
9 *Izumrud.*
10 *Jemchug.*
11 *Imperator Nikolai I.*
12 *General Admiral Apraxin.*
13 *Admiral Seniavine.*
14 *Admiral Oushakoff.*
15 *Oleg.*
16 *Aurora*

accordingly, Togo himself turns north with his main squadron, and despatches Kamimura with the armoured cruisers to assist the protected cruisers in the south.

At 5.40 Togo, with his four battleships and the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga*, comes within close range of the enemy's auxiliary cruiser, the *Ural*. The utter helplessness of such craft in the presence of giant fighting ships becomes painfully obvious. A single round and the *Ural* sinks, poor little pawn that she is on this great chess-board. A few minutes later and it transpires that the craft had been struggling to get away in company of the bigger ships which Togo was seeking. For on the same quarter there come into sight the remaining ships of the principal Russian force, six of them flying in a cluster to the north-east, the *Alexander III.*, *Borodino*, *Orel*, *Sissoi Veliky Navarin*, and *Nakimoff*. (It is ascertained later that the *Nikolai I.* and the three coast-defence ironclads have gone south to take part in the cruiser action.) Admiral Togo at once makes for the fugitive ships, and, steaming parallel to them, resumes the fight at 6 p.m. The Russians change their course again and again, finally pushing to the north-west, but suffering heavily. The *Imperator Alexander III.* leaves the line once more, and drops astern. A few minutes past seven she is seen labouring with a heavy list up to the side of the *Nakimoff*, where she turns over and goes to the bottom.

At 6.40 the *Borodino*, which during this phase has been leading the Russian line, catches fire, and, after the flames have been raging for forty-three minutes, she becomes suddenly enveloped in smoke and disappears, the fire evidently having reached her magazine.

It is now growing dusk, and the main Japanese squadron, which has been gradually ceasing to press the enemy, draws off to the east at 7.28 p.m. The battleship fighting on the 27th ends with the setting of the sun, and Admiral Togo sends a despatch boat with orders to the fleet to proceed northward, and rendezvous on the following morning at the Ulneung Islands.

We must now revert to the cruiser fighting in the south, for the details of which we shall have to draw chiefly on Admiral Togo's official report, as published in the *Times* of July 24th. It will be recalled, that at 2 p.m., when the order to open the fight was given, the protected cruisers separated from the main squadron and steamed south with a view to menacing the vessels in the enemy's rear, namely, the special service steamers, the cruisers *Oleg*, *Aurora*, *Svetlana*, and *Almaz*, and the armoured cruisers *Dmitri Donskoi* and *Vladimir Monomakh*.

"The Dewa and Uriu sections," to quote Admiral Togo, "working together in line, reaching the enemy's cruiser squadron, and steaming in a direction opposite to his course, engaged him, gradually passing round his rear and emerging on his starboard, where the attack was renewed on parallel courses. Then, taking advantage of their superior speed, these sections changed front at their own convenience, sometimes engaging the enemy on the port side, sometimes on the starboard. After thirty minutes of this fighting the enemy's rear section gradually fell into disorder, his special service steamers and warships scattering and losing their objective. At a little after 3 p.m. a vessel like the *Aurora* left the enemy's rank and approached our ships, but being severely injured by our heavy fire she fell back. Again, at 3.40 p.m., three of the enemy's destroyers sallied out to attack us, but

were repulsed without accomplishing anything.

"The result of this combined attack by the Dewa and Uriu sections was that by 4 o'clock there had been a marked development of the situation, the enemy's rear sections being thrown completely into disorder. Ships in this quarter had fallen out of their formation, all seemed to have suffered more or less injury, and some were seen to have become unmanageable.

"The Uriu section, at about 4.20 p.m., seeing one of the enemy's special service steamers (probably the *Anjier*), a three-master with two smoke stacks, which had become isolated, at once bore down on her and sank her. This section also fired heavily on another special service steamer, a four-master with one funnel (probably the *Iltis*), and nearly sank her."

About this time the remainder of the Japanese protected cruisers joined forces with the Dewa and Uriu sections, and the whole working together would doubtless have succeeded in completing the rout of the Russian cruisers and special service steamers. But, as mentioned above, that section of the original left Russian column which consisted of the battleship *Imperator Nikolai I.* and the three coast-defence ironclads, *Apraxin*, *Seniavine*, and *Oushakoff*, had now parted from the Russian main squadron, and, steaming southward, had come to their cruiser comrades' assistance at a critical moment. Sharp fighting followed, and the flagships of both the Dewa and Uriu sections—*Kasagi* and *Naniwa*—were hit below the water-line, and were compelled to retire in order to effect repairs. The *Kasagi*, indeed, was so badly damaged that she had to seek refuge in a convenient bay, and was unable to take part in the next day's operations. The flag of Rear-Admiral Dewa was transferred to the *Chitose*, which, it will be remembered, was concerned in the memorable last fight of the famous Russian cruiser *Novik* (Chapter LII.).

The superiority of Japan in this quarter was happily restored by the arrival of Vice-Admiral Kamimura's armoured cruiser squadron which, as noted above, was detached by Togo about 5.30 for the purpose of assisting the protected cruisers. Without difficulty now the Japanese drove the Russian ships before them, the majority of the latter flying northward in a group. It was in the course of this pursuit that the final torpedoing of the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, as narrated a short time back, was effected. The pursuers also sighted and sunk the Russian repair ship *Kamchatka*. This unfortunate vessel had had a terrible experience of modern naval warfare. She had been hit early in the battle, her steering gear being so badly disabled that she could only circle helplessly. Another shell struck the bridge, and swept the captain and three officers overboard. Finally, the masts were brought down and the vessel's stern ripped up. Fifty-six of the crew lowered boats, and were hardly clear of the ship when she lurched heavily, her bows rose in the water, and she sank with a tremendous roar.

Thus ended the daylight fighting on the fateful May 27th. It had lasted only five hours and a half, since the few preliminary shots exchanged during the earliest stage of the Russian Fleet's passage through Tsu-Shima Strait can hardly be reckoned as part of the main battle—and into this short space had been packed as much history, as much dramatic action, and, alas! as much terrible human suffering, as in many land contests lasting over

many days. In the foregoing account no special effort has been made to emphasise the luridly picturesque aspects of this awful struggle, it being considered far preferable to produce a coherent and trustworthy narrative of actual events. In any case, there is no great advantage to be derived from dwelling upon such peculiar horrors as constitute, perhaps, the salient features of a great battle at sea under latterday conditions. A mere suggestion is sufficient of the ghastly scenes to be witnessed on board a modern warship which has become a target for a straight-shooting enemy.

The appalling havoc, the cruel detriment to life and limb that may be caused by the entry of a single 12 in. shell into such a confined space, crowded with mechanism, and with one or two human lives to every foot of the ship's length, is better imagined than described. But few even of the strongest imaginations can truly picture the added misery, the maddening despair, that must ensue when, amid the horrible confusion and indescribable agonies experienced on board a ship that has been repeatedly struck by giant projectiles, it is realised that the vessel is hopelessly on fire. Small wonder is it that such actualities should produce sheer insanity. Some of the Russian sailors who were taken prisoners after the Battle of the Sea of Japan ran about, poor fellows, quite aimlessly, and utterly heedless of their new surroundings. Their minds had completely given way—at any rate, temporarily—under the stress of the shocking ordeals they had undergone. To enter closely into the details of such harrowing performances, and possibly in so doing to lose the thread of an otherwise absorbing and deeply instructive story, is no part of the present writer's intention.

Indeed, as it is, the claims of the mere historical narrative are pressing. Although, as a mere question of the assertion of naval supremacy, by far the greatest naval battle of modern times had now been fought and won, Admiral Togo had yet much to do before he could garner the sheaves of his victory. It was, in the first instance, necessary for him to place the reality of the Russian defeat beyond all question, since there were still enough Russian ships afloat to give serious trouble if Vladivostok could be reached. Night had fallen, and with battleships and cruisers alone he might not, on the following morning, be able to maintain a sufficiently close watch over the wider expanses of the Sea of Japan. It almost goes without saying, that the astute Togo had fully foreseen this, and had not only made all arrangements for the continuance of the fighting on the morrow, but had devised an alarming preoccupation for the disordered remnant of the Russian Fleet during the intervening hours of darkness.

It has been noted in the preceding chapter that Admiral Togo had at his disposal a very large force of torpedo craft, organised in six sections of destroyers, and as many sections of torpedo-boats. As soon as the daylight fighting on May 27th was over—that is to say, about 7.30 p.m.—this large crowd of mosquitoes was let loose upon the enemy with striking results. The portion of the Japanese Admiral's official report dealing with these operations is of singular interest outside its transparent accuracy, and no apology is needed for a somewhat lengthy verbatim extract.

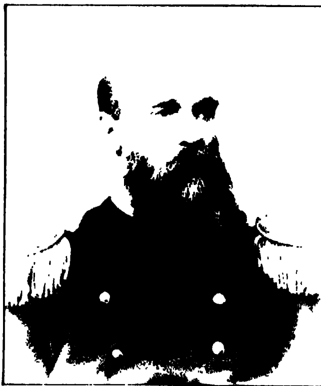
The Admiral commences by remarking, that since the morning of the 27th a strong south-west wind had produced such a rough sea that the handling of



CAPT. BAER.
(Osslabya.)



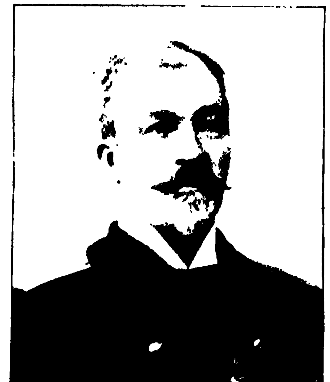
CAPT FERZEN.
(Izumrud.)



CAPT. SEREBRENNIKOFF.
(Borodino.)



CAPT. TCHAGIN.
(Almaz.)



CAPT. IGNATIUS.
(Kniaz Suvaroff.)



CAPT. YEGORIEFF.
(Aurora.)



CAPT. BUCHVOSTOFF.
(Imperator Alexander III.)

SOME RUSSIAN COMMANDERS WHO TOOK PART IN THE GREAT NAVAL BATTLE.

small craft had become very difficult. Indeed, he himself had caused the torpedo section which accompanied his own squadron to take refuge in Miura Bay before the day-fighting commenced. "Toward evening the wind lost some of its force, but the sea remained very high, and the state of affairs was very unfavourable for night operations by our torpedo craft. Nevertheless, our destroyer sections and torpedo sections, fearing to lose this unique occasion for combined action, all stood out before sunset regardless of the state of the weather, and each vying with the other to take the lead, approached the enemy. The Fujimoto destroyer section steaming from the north, the Yajima destroyer section and the Kawase torpedo section from the north-east, bore down on the enemy's main squadron, while the rear of the same squadron was approached by the Yoshijima destroyer section from the east, and the Hirose destroyer section from the south-east. The Fukuda, Otaki, Aoyama, and Kawada torpedo sections, coming from the south, pursued the detached vessels of the enemy's main squadron as well as the group of cruisers on a parallel line in his left rear.

"Thus as night fell these torpedo craft closed in on him from three sides. Alarmed apparently by this onset, the enemy at sunset steered off to the south-west, and seems to have then changed his course again to the east. At 8.15 p.m. the night battle was commenced by the Yajima destroyer section attacking the head of the enemy's main squadron, whereafter the various sections of torpedo craft swarmed about him from every direction, and until 11 p.m. kept up a continuous attack at close quarters. From nightfall the enemy made a desperate resistance by the aid of searchlights and the flashing guns, but the onset overcame him, he lost his formation and fell into confusion, his vessels scattering in all directions to avoid our onslaught.

"The torpedo sections pursuing, a pell-mell contest ensued, in the course of which the battleship *Sissoi Veliky*, and the armoured cruisers *Admiral Nakimoff* and *Vladimir Monomakh*, three ships at least, were struck by torpedoes, put out of action, and rendered unmanageable. On our side No. 69 of the Fukuda torpedo section, No. 34 of the Aoyama section, and No. 35 of the Kawada sections were all sunk by the enemy's shells during the action, while the destroyers *Harusame*, *Akatsuki*, *Ikazuchi*, and *Yugiri*, as well as the torpedo-boats *Sagi*, No. 68 and No. 33, suffered more or less from gun-fire or from collisions, being temporarily put out of action. The casualties also were comparatively numerous, especially in the Fukuda, Aoyama, and Kawada sections. The crews of the three torpedo-boats which sank were taken off by their consorts, the *Kari*, No. 31, and No. 61."

Some interesting details regarding the final destruction of the *Sissoi Veliky*, the *Admiral Nakimoff*, and *Vladimir Monomakh* are given at a later stage of Admiral Togo's report, and also in a statement by an officer of the Japanese Naval Staff quoted by Reuter's Tokio correspondent.

The *Sissoi Veliky*, after being torpedoed on the night of the 27th, was found in a sinking condition early the next morning by a Japanese special service steamer, which took off her crew and endeavoured to tow away the ship. But the torpedo had done its work too well, and the *Sissoi Veliky* sunk at about 11 o'clock. The *Nakimoff*, again, was found by another special service steamer, the *Sado Maru* (the vessel which escaped

from the Vladivostok squadron when the *Hitachi Maru* was sunk, as narrated in Chapter XXXII.), and the destroyer *Shiranui* at about 5.30 a.m. on the 28th in a sinking condition. What followed is best told in the words of the Japanese officer above-mentioned :—

"There were several Russian officers whose conduct in the recent battle deserves to be held high as model and example for all naval officers. Among them the most noteworthy was the conduct of Captain Rodionoff, commander of the *Admiral Nakimoff*. His gallantry is as praiseworthy as that of Commander Hirose. During the first day of the battle the *Nakimoff* was exposed to the fire of our main squadron and suffered serious damage. During the night she was made the object of severe torpedo attacks, and finally, completely disabled, she drifted close to Tsu-Shima. The vessel was sinking, and Captain Rodionoff sent seventy of the crew to land at Tsu-Shima, remaining on board himself with his chief navigator. When the Japanese approached the sinking vessel they asked the captain to leave the ship, but he refused. The Japanese boarded the vessel and endeavoured to drag him into the boat, but he resisted. The vessel was listing badly, and threatened every moment to plunge down into the sea. The Japanese were forced to draw off, and the captain went below, there to meet his death. Suddenly the ship went down, and our men thought the gallant officer was drowned. But Providence willed otherwise. We found the captain and navigator floating in the water, locked in each other's arms. They had embraced at what they thought was the moment of death, and were only half-conscious when we rescued them."

The *Vladimir Monomakh* was found about the same time as the *Nakimoff*, and an attempt was made to tow her also to Tsu-Shima. But the vessel was leaking badly, and towing became out of the question. Suddenly there was a loud explosion, and the *Vladimir Monomakh* began to settle in the water. The officer in command of the *Sado Maru* at once ordered his men to line the decks, and the buglers to sound a parting salute to a ship which had been bravely fought, and to the gallant fellows who had gone to the bottom with her.

In addition to the work recorded a little while back as having been accomplished by the destroyers and torpedo-boats on the night of the 27th, the Suzuki destroyer section and other torpedo sections searched the sea for the enemy. At 2 a.m. on the 28th the Suzuki section sighted two ships steaming north at a distance of some twenty-seven miles east-north-east of Kurasaki. The section immediately gave chase, and sunk one of the ships, which was afterwards proved to be the *Navarin*. Thus, notwithstanding the rough sea, the torpedo craft between them compassed the destruction of two battleships and two armoured cruisers.

Some idea of the deadly earnestness which the Japanese destroyers and torpedo-boats put into their work may be gathered from the fact that the *Navarin* was afterwards ascertained to have been struck by no fewer than four torpedoes, two on each side, after which it is not surprising to learn that she sank in a few minutes. The Russian prisoners later gave very impressive accounts of the manner in which the Japanese "mosquitoes" were handled. Their attacks were stated to have been "indescribably fierce." They "steamed in so rapidly and so close, that it was impossible to

deal with them, and they came to such short range that the warships' guns could not be depressed sufficiently to aim at them."

Day broke clear on May 28th. By an early hour Togo's main squadrons were within twenty miles of the Ulneung Islands, and the remainder of the fleet was coming up smartly to the rendezvous. "At 5.20 a.m.," says the Admiral, "when I was about to form the armoured cruiser squadron into a search cordon from east to west for the purpose of cutting the enemy's line of retreat, the cruiser squadron which was advancing northward, being then about sixty miles astern, signalled that it had sighted the enemy eastward, and that several columns of smoke were observable. Shortly afterwards this squadron approached the enemy and reported that his force consisted of four battleships—two of these were subsequently found to be coast-defence vessels—and two cruisers, and that it was advancing north.

"Without further inquiry it became clear that these ships formed the chief body of the enemy's remaining force. Therefore our main squadron and armoured cruiser squadron put about, and, gradually heading east, barred the enemy's line of advance, while the Togo and Uriu sections, joining the cruiser squadron, contained him in rear, so that by 10.30 a.m., at a point some eighteen miles south of Takeshima (the Liancourt Rocks), the enemy was completely enveloped. His force consisted of the battleships *Orel* and *Nicolai I.*, the coast-defence ships *Admiral Apraxin* and *Admiral Seniavine*, and the cruiser *Izumrud*, five ships in all. Another cruiser was seen far southward, but she passed out of sight. Not only had these remnants of the enemy's fleet already sustained heavy injuries, but also they were, of course, incapable of resisting our superior force. Therefore, soon after our main squadron and armoured cruiser squadron had opened fire on them, Rear-Admiral Niebogatoff, who commanded the enemy's ships, signalled his desire to surrender with the force under him. I accepted his surrender, and as a special measure allowed the officers to retain their swords."

From this surrender the *Izumrud* must be excluded. She had previously made her escape, and having managed to elude both the Togo section of protected cruisers and the *Chitose*, by which she was hotly pursued, made her way north, only to become a wreck in Vladimir Bay, to the north-east of Vladivostok.

Another and less disastrous escape had been achieved by the three Russian protected cruisers, *Oleg*, *Aurora*, and *Jemchug*, which, at a comparatively early stage of the previous day's proceedings, had broken away under command of Admiral Enquist, and, steaming southward, had made Manila, where the ships were duly interned. The only other escapes were those of the cruiser *Almaz*, which, after being twice hit, reached Vladivostok; one destroyer which made the same port; one destroyer which reached Shanghai and was there disarmed; and two special service steamers which fled to Shanghai and were interned.

To continue the sad catalogue of Russian disaster: At about 10 a.m. on the 28th, the *Svetlana* was engaged by two Japanese cruisers, the *Otawa* and *Niitaka*, and, after an action lasting an hour, was sunk off Chyuk-pyong Bay. A little later the *Niitaka*, accompanied by the destroyer *Murakomo*, gave chase to the Russian destroyer *Buistri*, and drove her ashore. The survivors of the crews of both the



RUSSIAN SAILORS FROM THE BALTIC FLEET LANDING ASHORE ON THE JAPANESE COAST.

Svetlana and *Buistri* were rescued by Japanese special service steamers, which did splendidly humane work throughout the 28th.

While Admiral Togo's main squadron was engaged in bringing about the surrender of the *Orel*, *Nikolai I.*, *Apraxin*, and *Seniavine* near the Liancourt Rocks, the coast-defence ironclad *Admiral Oushakoff* came into sight. She had apparently steered for the smoke, in the hope of rejoining the remainder of the section to which she had originally belonged. On perceiving the painful state of the case the *Oushakoff* at once steamed off at full speed. Thereupon Admiral Togo signalled to the big and fast armoured cruisers *Iwate* and *Yakumo* to start in pursuit. These overhauled the *Oushakoff* about 8 o'clock, and summoned her to surrender, signalling that Admiral Niebogatoff had already done so. The *Oushakoff* began to run up a reply, but desisted, and opened fire. The *Iwate* and *Yakumo* replied with their 8 in. guns at 8,000 yards, and sank the ironclad in thirty minutes, subsequently saving 332 out of a crew of 412. The incident aroused much comment in Japanese circles, as the *Oushakoff* had bigger guns and thicker armour than the *Iwate* and *Yakumo*, and for 8 in. guns to sink such a vessel at 8,000 yards was a notable achievement.

Towards evening a highly sensational incident occurred. At 3.30 p.m. the destroyers *Sazanami* and *Kagero* sighted at a point some forty miles south-west of the Ulneung Islands two Russian destroyers escaping to the east. These were at once pursued at full speed to the north-west, and when the Japanese had overtaken them at 4.45 p.m. an action commenced. One of the Russian destroyers showed fight, and eventually got away, but the other ran up a white flag, and was promptly boarded by a Japanese officer from the *Sazanami* with a party of bluejackets. It transpired that the captured ship was the *Biedvi*, having on board the wounded Russian Commander-in-Chief. It will be remembered that on the 27th Admiral Rozhdestvensky and his staff had been transferred from the former flagship *Kniaz Suvaroff* to the destroyer *Buiny*. During the night of the 27th the *Buiny* had been separated from the rest of the fleet, and in the morning of the 28th it was deemed advisable to remove the Admiral and his staff to the *Biedvi*. The latter steamed ahead at first with the *Gromky*, which was afterwards sunk, and later with another destroyer. But when overtaken by the *Sazanami* she had run short of coal and water, and had sustained injury to her engines.

The Japanese found that the unfortunate Admiral was severely wounded—later it was discovered that his skull had been fractured, necessitating an operation—and consented to allow him to remain on board the *Biedvi*. They took the destroyer in tow to Sasebo, a dangerous performance, as the seas were heavy, and the tow-rope parted twice. The voyage, however, was at length safely negotiated, and the wounded Admiral received into hospital, where he was soon sufficiently restored to convalescence to be able to telegraph a report of his misfortune to his Imperial master.

Taking into account the recorded escapes, there now remains only one Russian vessel unaccounted for, namely, the armoured cruiser *Dmitri Donskoi*. The story of this vessel's destruction is thus succinctly told by Admiral Togo:—

"At 5 p.m. the Uriu section and the Yajima destroyer section, which were

searching for the enemy in a westerly direction, sighted the *Dmitri Donskoi*, steaming north, and went in pursuit. Just as the Russian vessel had reached a point some thirty miles south of the Ulneung Islands, the *Otowa* and the *Niitaka*, with the destroyers *Asagiri*, *Shirakumo*, and *Fubuki*, which were coming back from Chynk-pyong Bay, bore down on her from the west and opened fire, so that she was brought between a cross cannonade from these and the Uriu section. This heavy fire from both sides was kept up until after sunset, by which time she was almost shattered, but still afloat. During the night she passed out of sight. So soon as the cruisers had ceased firing on her the *Fubuki* and the Yajima destroyer section attacked her, but the result was uncertain. On the following morning, however, she was seen drifting near the south-east coast of the Ulneung Islands, where she finally sank. Her survivors, who had landed on the islands, were taken off by the *Kasuga* and the *Fubuki*."

And so ended the great Battle of the Sea of Japan—ended with the almost complete obliteration of the one force, and with almost incredibly small detriment to the other. To take first the human casualties in this terrific struggle, it is sufficient to say briefly that, in addition to between two and three thousand who must have perished, the Russian prisoners totalled 6,143. The Japanese casualties throughout the action were 116 killed, and 538 wounded, including officers.

But it is in loss of ships that the disparity is so amazing. Admiral Rozhdestvensky entered the Tsu-Shima Strait with an aggregate of 38 ships, namely, 8 battleships, 9 cruisers (3 armoured and 6 protected), 3 coast-defence ships, 9 destroyers, 1 auxiliary cruiser, 6 special service steamers, and 2 hospital ships. Of the battleships, six were sunk (*Kniaz Suvaroff*, *Alexander III.*, *Borodino*, *Ossliabya*, *Sissoi Veliky*, and *Navarin*), and two were captured (*Orel* and *Nikolai I*). Of the armoured cruisers all were sunk (*Nakimoff*, *Dmitri Donskoi*, and *Vladimir Monomakh*) ; and of the protected cruisers one was sunk (*Svetlana*) and one wrecked (*Izumrud*). One of the coast-defence ships, *Oushakoff* was sunk, and the other two (*Apraxin* and *Seniavine*) were captured. Of the destroyers, five were accounted for. The auxiliary cruiser *Ural* was sunk, and four of the special service steamers. Both the hospital ships were captured, one, the *Orel*, being retained, and the other released.

The Japanese losses in the two days' fight were only three torpedo-boats! Some others of the Japanese ships, as has been recorded, sustained more or less injury, but not even one of them was incapacitated for future service.

In transmitting officially these astounding results, Admiral Togo observes :—

"There was no great difference in the strengths of the opposing forces in this action, and I consider that the enemy's officers and men fought with the utmost energy and intrepidity on behalf of their country. If, nevertheless, our combined squadrons won the victory and achieved the remarkable success recorded above, it was because of the virtues of his Majesty the Emperor, not owing to any human prowess. It cannot but be believed that the small number of our casualties was due to the protection of the spirits of the Imperial Ancestors. Even our officers and men, who fought so valiantly and so stoutly, seeing these results, found no language to express their astonishment."

That the results in question exceeded

the most sanguine Japanese calculations is, on the face of it, probable. But confirmation of this proposition is afforded by the statement that Admiral Togo's original plan of operations embraced the whole interval between Quelpart Island and Vladivostok, covered a space of four days, and included seven distinct phases, of which only the third, fourth, and fifth —the daylight battle of the 27th, the torpedo attack on the night of the 27th, and the intercepting operations of the 28th—materialised. It is evident, then, that he not only did not expect Rohzdestvensky to enter the Tsu-Shima Strait at such a convenient point, and in such a vulnerable formation, as were selected by that unfortunate leader, but that he anticipated considerable difficulty in regard to the immediate sequel of the main engage-

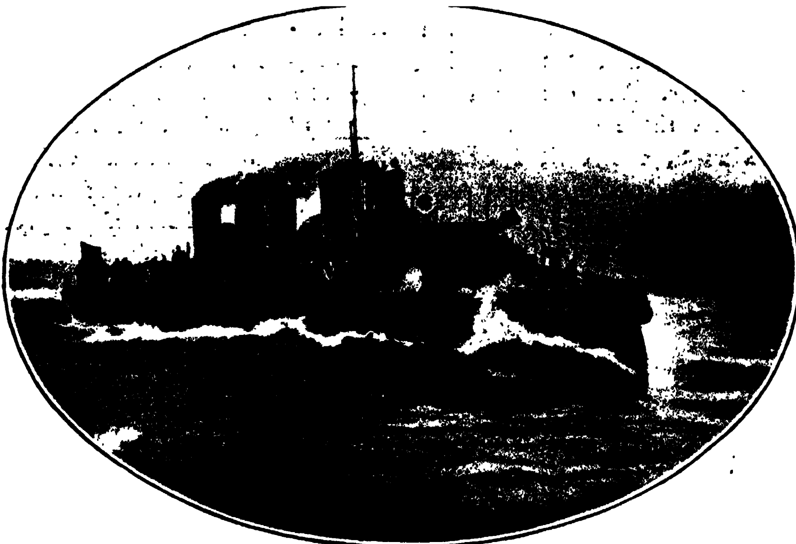


A SHATTERED TARGET: SCENE AMIDSHIPS OF THE RUSSIAN BATTLESHIP *OREL* AFTER CAPTURE.

ment. The description given of Togo's fifth projected phase, namely, "the assembly of his *surviving* ships on the morning after the torpedo attack along a line stretching from the Ulneung Islands to the Liancourt Rocks, and thence eastward towards the Japanese coast," is significant. Togo's surprise as well as his gratification must have been intense at finding that, in the actual event, those "surviving ships" comprised to all intents and purposes the whole of his original fleet.

Some slight disappointment may have been felt by the Japanese at the small number of captures compared with the mass of valuable material sent to the bottom. Practically speaking, the only vessel of much use which fell into their hands was the new battleship *Orel*, the *Nikolai I.* and the two coast-defence ships being quite unfit for employment in the Japanese first line. Still, even for these, as for the old Chinese battleship *Chinyen*, suitable and honourable work would assuredly be found in a navy so careful and skilful in handling its resources as that of Japan.

Separate attention will be given to the immediate consequences and to some of the lessons of the Battle of the Sea of Japan. Meanwhile, this chapter closes naturally with a reiteration of the decisive character of this epoch-making conflict. Russia's naval power, and, indeed, her designs generally in the Far East, had now been crushed as utterly as the naval power and hopes of Xerxes were crushed at the Battle of Salamis. The latterday sea-fight, too, had this advantage over that which was brought to such a glorious conclusion by the triremes of Themistocles nearly twenty-four centuries previously. For victory fell, not to an inharmonious confederacy of rather puny States, but to a Great Power now more than ever convinced of the soundness of its policy, the efficacy of its warlike methods, and, above all, of its capacity to hold its own.



THE BOAT IN WHICH ADMIRAL ROZHDESTVENSKY ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE: THE RUSSIAN DESTROYER *BIEDVI.*

CHAPTER XCVII.

BATTLE OF THE SEA OF JAPAN (*CONTINUED*)—THE SEQUEL ON THE SPOT—FINALITY OF THE RESULT—COMMENTS AND CRITICISM—SPIRIT OF THE JAPANESE NAVY—LESSONS OF THE FIGHT—CONTEMPORARY OPINION—THE DEMAND FOR PEACE—CONFERENCE ARRANGED.

THE direct, immediate, and local sequel to the Battle of the Sea of Japan does not call for any lengthy description. The very completeness of the Japanese victory rendered unnecessary most of the measures which might have been needed had any remnant of the Russian force been conceivably in a position to give further trouble. Seldom, indeed, has a battle been fought even by sea which has brought the current naval operations more clearly to a full stop. There was no question of pursuit, for there was nothing to pursue. All that it was needful for Japan to do was to make sure that the insignificant remnant of the original Russian Armada was being properly dealt with in the ports in which it had sought refuge, and this proved a very simple matter. With regard to Admiral Enquist's three cruisers which had fled to Manila, the United States Government promptly made it clear that it would permit no sort of departure from the ordinarily accepted laws of neutrality. When Admiral Enquist asked to be allowed to patch up his ships, which were badly knocked about, he was told that no such repairs as were obviously required could be made unless the vessels were interned. Any sort of appeal from this decision was hopeless, more especially as there were three American battleships and several cruisers on the spot to enforce, if necessary, respect for the American view of the case. Accordingly, Admiral Enquist telegraphed to the Tsar, and received from him an order that the ships should be interned.

With regard to the destroyer and two special service steamers which had escaped to Shanghai, the Japanese waited a few days, and then sent a small squadron to the mouth of the Yang-tse, a destroyer from which steamed past the shipping along the Bund, stopped for a moment opposite the interned Russian vessels, and then returned to join its squadron out at sea. Such a hint was sufficient to show both Russians and Chinese that any attempt on the part of the interned ships to break out would lead to trouble.

For the rest, the Japanese fighting squadrons returned quietly to their bases preparatory to a future movement against Sakhalin, which will be duly dealt with presently. The captured warships *Orel*, *Nikolai I.*, *Admiral Apraxin*, and *Admiral Seniavine* were taken to Sasebo, and there renamed *Iwami*, *Iki*, *Oki-no-shima*, and *Mishima* respectively. Admiral Togo himself made his may to the Naval Hospital in order to call on Admiral Rozhdestvensky, to whom he apologised for the absence of comforts which he felt should be afforded to such a distinguished patient. Surely here is another scene worthy of commemoration by some great artist capable of infusing into

his rendering some idea of the true inwardness of a strangely moving incident.

On May 31st the following Imperial Rescripts were issued. To Admiral Togo the Mikado wrote:—

"Our combined fleet encountered the enemy's fleet in the Korean Strait, and, after a desperate battle lasting several days, annihilated it, accomplishing an unprecedented feat. We are glad that, by the loyalty of our officers and men, we have been enabled to respond to the spirit of our ancestors. The future war will be long, but we hope that you who are loyal, brave, and faithful will secure a successful result."

The Imperial Rescript to the Navy was as follows:—

"Our Navy, with the best of strategy and great courage, has annihilated the enemy's squadron and answered our hope. We appreciate deeply your splendid success."

While Japan thus simply and unostentatiously inaugurated her reign of undisputed naval supremacy, Russia was not slow in realising that the blow she had just received was, as far as sea-power was concerned, a completely paralysing one. At first there was some natural hesitation to believe that the disaster was as complete as the Tokio telegrams declared it to be. But by the morning of the 30th the Tsar at Tsarskoe Selo had received from General Liniévitch a telegram announcing the arrival of the cruiser *Almaz* at Vladivostok, and confirming the news of the defeat in all essential particulars. A few hours later the awful intelligence was communicated to the Ministries, and the next morning the public was fully acquainted with the details of Russia's tremendous losses.

It goes without saying, that the sensation created was profound. The Tsar is said to have been quite beside himself with grief when he learnt the news, and to have exclaimed: "Now this last hope, too, has been buried, and Rozhdestvensky's warning, on the eve of his departure, has come true!" The stupefaction caused in St. Petersburg by the tale of losses was enhanced by the fact that for many belonging to the upper classes the sinking of several ships with all their crews meant sad personal bereavement. As a correspondent remarks, the reverses suffered by the army "had carried grief mostly into the families of the provincial landowners. But the last Pacific Fleet contained many officers belonging to the leading families of St Petersburg. For example, the *Alexander III.* was officered entirely from the Imperial Naval Guard, to which nominations are made only by the Emperor personally."

The realisation by Russia of the futility of further naval effort was soon rendered apparent by the announcement in the German Press that the German seamen who had been engaged by the Russian Governmen for service with the Fourth Pacific Squadron, hitherto supposed to be actively preparing to start for the Far East, had been notified that their contract was to be regarded as cancelled. Of course, a decision in this direction was a foregone conclusion, but such prompt official action showed a somewhat unusually ready acceptance by the Naval Department of the obvious facts of the situation.

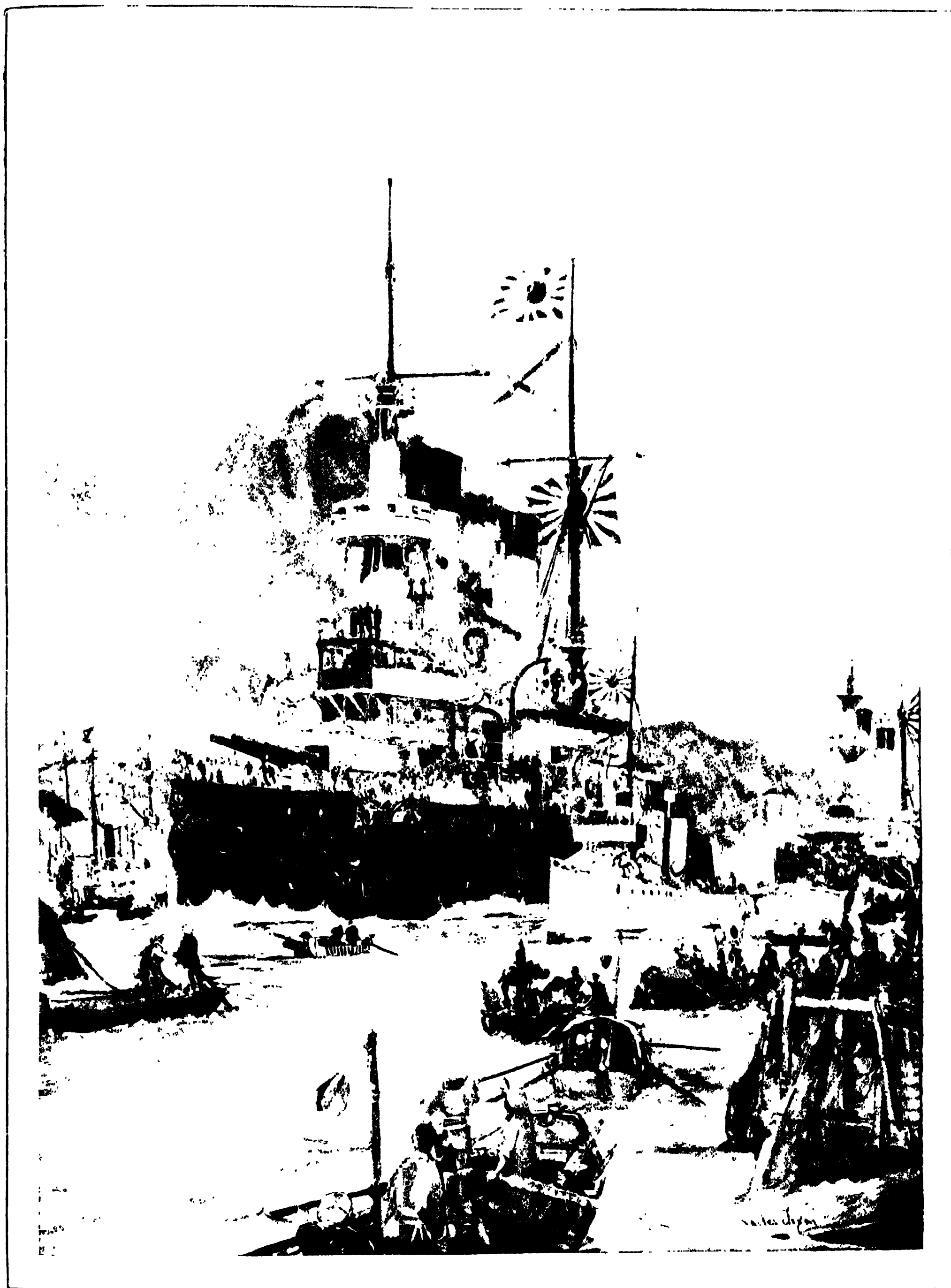
By the middle of June it was known that the defeat of Admiral Rozhdestvensky had had other important results. The Grand Duke Alexis, who for twenty-four years had held the Commander-in-Chiefship of the Russian Navy, had tendered, and the Tsar had accepted, his resignation. Admiral Avellan, the Minister of Marine, also resigned, and there

was talk that the entire naval administration would be completely reorganised.

Incidentally, some excitement was created in St. Petersburg by sensational reports as to the reasons for the surrender of Admiral Niebogatoff with the *Orel*, *Nikolai I.*, *Apraxin*, and *Seniavine*. It was confidently and circumstantially stated that the surrender was due entirely to the mutinous conduct of the Russian sailors, who, according to one account, bound the Admiral and many other officers in their cabins and hoisted the white flag. So serious was the commotion caused in St. Petersburg society by contradictory rumours concerning the surrender, that the General Staff found it expedient to announce that Rear-Admiral Niebogatoff and the captains of the four surrendered ships would, on their return to Russia, be tried on charges involving for those found guilty the possibility of capital punishment or dismissal from the service with degradation. As the incident is one of some historical importance, and a serious question of naval ethics is involved, it is well to borrow from the *Times*, as a set-off to the rather suggestive action of the Russian General Staff, the sound and generous pronouncement of a prominent Japanese naval officer with reference to Niebogatoff's surrender:—

"Admiral Niebogatoff is an officer of reputation and common sense. He suffered from no lack of resolution to blow up his four ships, and thus prevent them from falling into the enemy's hands. But the feat would have been hard to accomplish. Sympathising with the pain the Russian Admiral must have felt, I think that those who condemn him for surrendering really underrate the skill shown by Togo and the efforts made by all under his command to render this surrender inevitable. Consider the reasons of the capitulation. Not only had the Russian vessels been deprived of a large part of their fighting power during the battle of the previous day, but thereafter they had been subjected to a terrible torpedo onslaught throughout the night. They were so weary as to be almost incapable of movement. They did not know what had become of their comrades. At this hour of anguish and danger Togo's flagship suddenly appeared at the head of a fleet of twenty-seven warships, strong and fresh. What was to be expected but surrender in such conditions? The Russian officers are just as brave as ours. No one should fall into the error of imagining that any ordinary considerations would induce them to surrender."

But, as has been already indicated, such minor consequences of the Battle of the Sea of Japan were merely incidental to the outstanding fact that, in a naval sense, Russia's hopes for the continuance of the war were now quite dead. Further action on naval lines was impossible, and any fresh expenditure of energy in naval directions would be ridiculous, as far as the present conditions of the conflict were concerned. It is interesting to add that this aspect of the finality of the Russian defeat was reflected internationally. As an early result of the disappearance of Russia's naval power in the Far East, the Dutch Government promptly recalled from the Dutch East Indies the three battleships it had stationed in Eastern waters, in order to prevent any violation of Dutch neutrality. A little later the British Government followed suit by reducing its China Squadron, it being clear that a moderate force would be sufficient to watch British interests in this quarter, now that certain grave contingencies had been removed,



SPOILS OF WAR.

The "General Admiral Apraxin" and "Admiral Seniavine" brought into the Japanese Naval Station at Sasebo, flying the flag of the Rising Sun.

and our Ally's supremacy in Far Eastern waters was no longer liable to violent interruption by successive Russian fleets.

By way of parenthesis, it may be here noted that the immediate sequel to the Battle of the Sea of Japan was not without passing uneasiness for this country by reason of a strange recrudescence of attacks by Russian auxiliary cruisers on British shipping, on the pretext that the latter were engaged in contraband trade. It seemed almost laughable that Russia on the morrow of such a naval defeat as that which she had just suffered should indulge in these audacious performances, more especially considering the warnings she had already received on the subject. But Great Britain was not in the mood to take a mirthful view of the case, and it was quickly borne in upon the Government that strong action in the matter was imperative. Accordingly, the Russian Foreign Office was warned that these unjustifiable attacks must forthwith cease, and, when the Russian Admiralty professed its inability to communicate with its troublesome corsairs, it was intimated that, as in the case of the *Peterburg* and *Smolensk*, British warships would convey the necessary orders. The Russian Government acquiesced, and the cloud, which at one time began to look rather black, passed off.

We may now turn to a brief review of the salient features of the great battle, and to a few of the more important lessons to be derived from it. In the first place, and above all else, it seems, in spite of Admiral Togo's polite repudiation of marked difference between the two fleets, impossible to get away from the fact that at every single point, with the exception of the number of big guns available, the Russian Fleet are shown by the result to have been hopelessly outclassed. In the first place, their Admiral was an inferior, as he was a far less experienced, fighting leader; his strategy and tactics were both feeble compared with those of Togo, of whom the famous American naval critic, Captain Mahan, has placed on record a remarkable appreciation: "His own personal skill and sound judgment, now attested and matured through a year's experience of war, under varying conditions, make it probable that in the outlines of his conduct we see manifested the convictions reached by a naval officer who, beyond the others at the present moment, can appreciate with the accuracy of intimate acquaintance what are the real possibilities open to each branch of naval warfare." Which is, surely, tantamount to saying that Togo acted as he did because he, as the most competent naval officer living, knew that what he did was right. A pedestal, indeed, on which to be set by such an authority!

The superiority of the Japanese *personnel*, both as regards officers and men, is so clearly incontestable, that no comment on this head is necessary The battleworthiness of their ships and the homogeneity of their squadrons are shown by the result to have more than compensated the difference in number of ironclad vessels. In the matter of torpedo craft and their handling, there was no comparison between the two opposing forces. Finally, what superiority the Russians possessed in the matter of big guns was counterbalanced by their incapacity to make good use of them. "The Japanese," says the *Times*, "shot so much more accurately than the enemy, that their gun-power was trebled and even quadrupled by comparison. On paper they had sixteen 12 in. guns against the Russians' twenty-six. In

actual practice the ratio was as 48, or even 64, to 26. This greatly superior gunnery was supplemented by tactics which furnished opportunities for its *maximum* efficacy. The Japanese vessels were again and again in positions that enabled them to concentrate their fire on special units of the enemy's fleet."

Before passing to an examination of the lessons of the battle, there is one point in the above broad statement of Japanese superiority which can be emphasised in a most interesting and instructive manner by quotation of a letter, a translation of which appeared in the *Times* of June 21st, 1905. The letter is one written to a friend by an officer of a first-class Japanese torpedo-boat, and, as will be seen, was despatched a short time before the great battle. It is a human document, indeed, and is gloriously instinct with *Bushido*, the martial spirit of the Japanese nation. The allusion to Admiral Togo at the end is full of pleasing significance:—

"A thousand apologies for my lengthy silence. We have been and are still busy, busy preparing a royal reception for the guests from the Baltic.

"When we of the Suiraidau (torpedo corps) meet ashore, we discuss and often wonder if after all the Russians will come or will they fail us. Do they know that we are ready? To north-west lies the harbour of Masampho, to south that of Sasebo, while Moji is on our east, and here we are waiting, waiting, and waiting for the enemy. Will he never come?

"If you do not hear from me when a meeting has taken place, take this as my farewell. I do not expect to see you again in this life, except perhaps in your dreams. When my boat goes down, I shall go too, and a Russian ship with us.

"It takes her weight in shells to sink a torpedo-boat—it's marvellous how they, the shells, do not hit.

"I have seen, not one, but many torpedo actions, and I know. With six compartments in the boat we ought to be able to close in within twenty yards of the target before she is sunk. If we hit, we shall go down with the Russians; if we are hit the Russians shall come with us, for the last man alive will steer the spare torpedo in the water. What is life but a dream of summer's night? Can one choose more glorious an exit than to die fighting for one's own country and for the Emperor who is a ruler and leader to the nation's heart? Does not many a worthy man end his life's chapter obscure for want of opportunity? Then let us uphold the honour and the duty of being Japanese. By going down with them we shall, in a measure, pay the debt we owe for the slaughter of these poor innocent peasants. They, too, are fighting for their country, so shall Bushi honour Bushi. There are more torpedo-boats and torpedo-boat destroyers than the number of ships in the whole fleet of Admiral Rozhdestvensky, and if each of them destroys or disables one of the enemy's vessels, it ought to do.

"Father Togo, now grey-haired, walks quietly to and fro on the bridge of the *Mikasa*, and keeps silence, so all will go well. Do you remember the story when he went up to Tokio for the first time since the commencement of this war? Some public school boys were determined to unharness the horses off his carriage, at the instigation of the *Asahi*, I believe, and themselves draw it up to the gate of the Imperial Palace. Well, Father Togo got wind of this, and so he sent his Chief-of-Staff in the carriage, while he was seen, but not recognised, to be quietly walking

towards Nijubashi, with his little daughter's hand in his. Will he play another trick upon the poor unsuspecting Russians when they come?

"I bid you again farewell. Work, work, and work, for the coming Japan depends on you young fellows."

What could the unfortunate Rozhdestvensky hope to do with officers and men such as his were known to be against a navy in which the prevailing spirit was that which glows so warmly in every line of this wonderful letter?

As to the tactics displayed on this momentous occasion, the writer considers that the purposes of this work cannot be better served than by a brief extract from an article entitled "The Japanese Trafalgar," contributed by Admiral the Hon. Sir E. R. Fremantle to the *United Service Magazine* for July, 1905. There are few, if any, more practical, more accomplished, or more experienced sailors living than Sir E. Fremantle, whose delightful account of "The Navy as I Have Known it" (Cassell & Co.) is one of the most popular and instructive contemporary collections of naval memoirs. Speaking really *ex cathedrâ*, Admiral Fremantle says:—

"Togo's 'sheep dog' tactics, as I have seen them called, were certainly bold, but they were justified by the result. It is doubtful whether any other course of action would have achieved such complete success, but they could not have been safely adopted without the advantage of speed, and with a less perfectly trained fleet. Rozhdestvensky's formation, on the other hand, was essentially faulty, and he had set himself an impossible task in endeavouring to force his way north, in the face of Togo's superior fleet, encumbered with non-fighting ships. These he should have got rid of, either leaving them behind till he had disposed of Togo, or sending them round Japan to endeavour to reach Vladivostok by the Tsugaru or Pérouse Straits. The mere mention of these alternatives shows how desperate was Rozhdestvensky's position. As it was, he fought in an order of sailing unsuitable for action in the endeavour to protect his non-fighting ships, while comparatively weak protected cruisers appear to have been mixed up with the battleships."

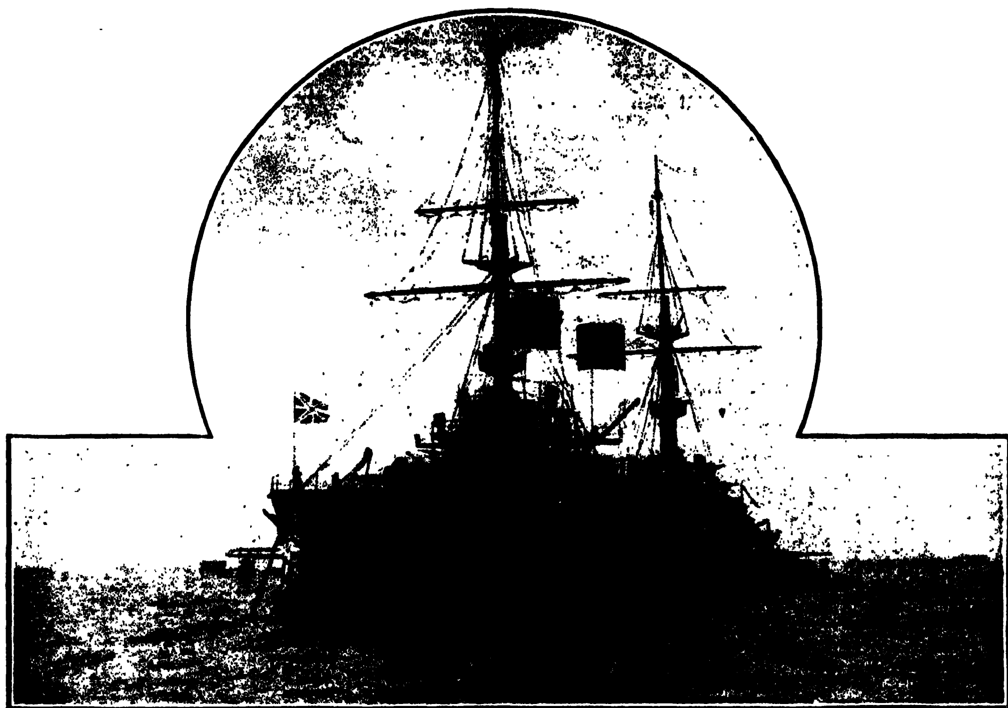
Sir E. R. Fremantle adds that it is to the credit of Admiral Togo that the latter so fully appreciated the weakness of his adversary, that he was not trammelled by any supposed rule of tactics, and that he made novel dispositions enabling him to reap every advantage, and to make his victory complete. An interesting supplement to this brief but exceedingly practical criticism is Captain Mahan's reminder that in his opening movement Admiral Togo carried out with singular fidelity Nelson's own counsel, "Outmanœuvre a Russian by attacking the head of his column, and so induce confusion."

Intimately associated with the tactical questions in this instance was, of course, the matter of speed. Rozhdestvensky had so mixed up his ships that, although he possessed a very fair number of vessels capable of seventeen knots and over, he was forced to manœuvre at a speed which allowed his adversary repeatedly to outstrip him and cross the bows of his leading ship. As to armour, the consensus of opinion among naval experts seems to be that, in spite of the sinking of the *Osslisbya*, the *Alexander III.*, and the *Oushakoff* by gun-fire alone, the battle did not even modify the accepted theory that the resistance of the right kind of

armour is superior to the power of the best practicable gun. Even in the case of the *Ossliabya* and the *Alexander III.* there was no reason to believe that the main armour was pierced, and in the case of the captured *Orel* the main armour was found to be quite sound.

Japan, but it would also seem that the armoured cruiser, more especially of the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga* type, vindicated its usefulness in a very remarkable way in the "Japanese Trafalgar."

By some it is argued that the torpedo operations on the night of May 27th-28th



RUSSIAN BATTLESHIP *IMPERATOR ALEXANDER III*

did much to rehabilitate the reputation of that weapon, which had been held by experts (see Vol. II. p. 556) to have suffered somewhat in the earlier stages of the war. A Japanese naval authority intimates that the lesson of the battle, as of the whole war, is that the utility of torpedo-craft depends mainly on the men handling them. But Admiral Fremantle in this connection would have us remember that the torpedo attack on the Russian ships in the Tsu-Shima Strait was delivered under every advantage, when the Russian

The superior accuracy of heavy guns was demonstrated clearly by the results attained in this battle, and much stress is laid by critics on the fact that so little real damage was done in the protected cruiser action on the 27th. At the same time it must be borne in mind that the seas were heavy, and that, accordingly, the decks of the light cruisers afforded particularly unsteady platforms. Speaking broadly, the view that battleships are essential factors in a naval fight is clearly illuminated by the Battle of the Sea of

ships had already been badly damaged, with many of their unprotected guns out of action. It may, perhaps, be added that the Russians were still further handicapped, since their anxiety to make as much progress northwards as possible put the use of torpedo nets out of the question.

At first it was believed that the heavy losses of the Russians had been partly brought about by the aid of submarines and floating mines. But it was subsequently, and authoritatively, declared that neither of these agencies was at work in the battle.

As indicating the probable influence of this great sea-fight on future naval construction, the further views of the Japanese naval authority, whose opinion respecting torpedo-craft has first been quoted, are of extreme interest. The following extract is from a translation which appeared in the *Japan Mail.* The first point is that, "in the armament of a battleship there should be not only 12 in. guns, but also 10 in. and 8 in., with an auxiliary equipment of 6 in. pieces. Speed, too, must be at least eighteen knots, and there should be bunker capacity to suffice for a long voyage. Every battleship should also have armour capable fully of resisting an armament such as she herself carries, and this means that her displacement must be over 16,000 tons. Further, if the probability of improved explosives be taken into account, the armour demanded to resist them may involve building ships with a displacement of something like 20,000 tons.

"Many of these arguments apply to armoured cruisers also. When their special duties are taken into account as well as their certain place in the line of battle, they, too, will tend to become larger, probably reaching a displacement of 15,000 tons. As to the armament of such cruisers, the line now taken in England is to mount two 9 in. guns, but probably two 8 in. with strong shields are fully as effective. There can be no doubt, however, of the inferiority of four 6 in. pieces to two 8 in. The cruiser of the future will probably have four 10 in. guns mounted in turrets fore and aft, with 8 in. pieces for auxiliary armament; the alternative being that the whole should be 8 in. weapons. There is room for further experiment in this direction, but on the whole the indications are in favour of a mixed armament of 10 in. and 8 in. pieces. What is beyond all question is that these cruisers must be capable of developing a speed of at last twenty-three knots.

"To come now to the question of protected cruisers, there has been much learned. Wireless telegraphy was expected to dispense with some of the functions of cruisers, but wireless telegraphy is shown to have its limitations. Protected cruisers remain a necessity. The torpedo-destroyer, with its great speed, suggests itself as a good scout, but its structural weakness and inability to face high seas are plain disqualifications. The cruiser must to a large extent serve as the eyes and ears of the fighting squadron and as a commerce destroyer. Here the great speed now given to merchant steamers has to be taken into account. There have been many instances of failures on the part of cruisers to capture merchant steamers, and the lesson is that, for scouting as well as commerce-destroying, there should be attached to every fleet a number of cruisers of from 3,000 to 4,000 tons displacement, with a speed of twenty-five knots at least, something of their protection being sacrificed if necessary. The Russian cruisers *Jem-*

chug and *Izumrud* are approximately suitable types, and what is now wanted is an improved form of these vessels. They should also be able to steam to great distances without recoaling.

"Concerning torpedo-destroyers, the only direction in which improvement seems specially desirable is that of seagoing capacity."

Having dealt with the immediate sequel to the battle, and with the technical and other lessons to be derived from it, the writer passes to the broader considerations involved in the effect of the fight upon the minds of the civilised world, and also to what may, with sufficient accuracy, be termed the historical result. The task of collating contemporary expressions of opinion in the World's Press is greatly simplified by the fact that, when the crushing nature of the Russian defeat was comprehended, at least nine out of every ten of the most influential organs in Europe and America did not trouble much to investigate causes or assign blame. The almost universal call was for peace, and, although to this appeal the Tsar for the present lent a deaf ear, there is no question that the actual end was partly brought about by this loudly-voiced conviction that after Rozhdestvensky's defeat peace was, in the interests not only of Russia, but of the whole world, an urgent necessity.

Especially was this view taken in France. A Paris correspondent tells us that the cry for peace was far more insistent in the French capital after the Battle of the Sea of Japan than it had been after the Battle of Mukden, being accompanied by such doubtfully sympathetic exclamations as, "C'est vraiment fort, mais ils sont fous!" M. Cornély, writing in the *Siècle*, discoursed on the tendency of "*Gouvernements d'aventure*" to demand unreasonable sacrifices from the nations they rule in order to satisfy their own ambitions or secure their own existence. He admitted that France had suffered in this way, and might suffer again. But Russia ought to have greater care for her national welfare, and also, he seemed to hint, for that of the friendly and allied nation. "Now that the Russians have been defeated at sea, after having been previously vanquished on land, it is the duty of their Government to conclude peace, and to restore the military force of the country."

In Germany there was not so much talk of peace. More conspicuous were "prudential considerations and the habitual regard paid to the 'Eastern Neighbour.'" Yet, the latter notwithstanding, at least one German paper, the *National Zeitung*, according to its lights spoke plainly, and showed clearly with what seriousness it regarded the definite character of the Russian defeat and its possible consequences. "We Germans," said this important organ, "might welcome a little blood-letting performed upon our mighty neighbour, just as it is welcomed by so many thousands of intelligent Russian patriots, who would gladly see the doom of their bureaucracy pronounced, and the path opened for those domestic reforms which are indispensable for their country." Nevertheless, "this *débâcle* must cause grave anxiety to all who believe in the great commercial and civilising mission of the white race throughout the world. For one moment all frontiers and all differences of nationality are abolished, and from the wreck of the Russian Armada there arises the gigantic conception of the unifying belief in our own race, and the common sorrow over its defeat."

But, putting aside Teutonic prudence

and ever-present alarmism respecting the Yellow Peril, the general note of the contemporary Press was, as has been said, quite loudly pacific. Moreover, there were other agencies at work in the same humane direction, and of these one came almost immediately into honourable prominence. Among the world's greatest men in 1905, the President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, who went to the White House in 1901 on the death of President M'Kinley, and was triumphantly re-elected in 1904, occupied a place very near indeed to the top by reason of a combination of qualities in which strength of purpose, beneficence of motive, persistence of effort, and utter independence were happily included. Himself experienced in the actualities of war, and profoundly mindful of the value to all civilised countries of international peace, President Roosevelt was no dreamer, and strangely unlikely to underestimate the difficulty of such a task as that of inducing two belligerents like Russia and Japan to shake hands. Yet, strong in the conviction that the *rôle* of peacemaker was one which might successfully be undertaken by the President of the Great Republic, this extraordinary man did not hesitate at this juncture to intervene with proposals which could not possibly be, in the first instance, acceptable to either of the parties addressed.



FIRST BATCH OF JAPANESE SAILORS, WOUNDED AT THE NAVAL BATTLE, ARRIVING AT SHIMBASHI STATION, TOKIO.

For in Russia it was soon decided that, in spite of the crushing effect of the Battle of the Sea of Japan, the war should go on in the hope of securing a success by land sufficient to enable, at any rate, satisfactory terms to be secured. In Japan, on the other hand, the final disappearance of Russia's naval chances in the Far East had opened up a brilliant prospect of further successes, including



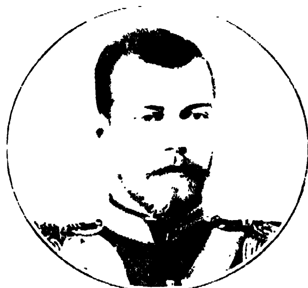
BARON KOMURA

Senior Japanese Plenipotentiary.



KOGORO TAKAHIRA,

Junior Japanese Plenipotentiary.



THE CZAR.



PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.



THE MIKADO



M. SERGIUS DE WITTE

Senior Russian Plenipotentiary.



BARON ROSEN,

Junior Russian Plenipotentiary.

the capture of Sakhalin and operations against Vladivostok. To approach belligerents in this frame of mind and thus situated appeared to be a futile experiment. But the "Cowboy President" did it, and on June 8th the following "identic despatch" was transmitted by him through diplomatic channels to the Japanese and Russian Governments:—

"The President feels that the time has come when, in the interest of all mankind, he must endeavour to see if it is not possible to bring to an end the terrible and lamentable conflict which is now being waged. With both Russia and Japan the United States has inherited ties of friendship and good will. He hopes for the prosperity and welfare of each, and feels that the progress of the world is being set back by the war between these two great nations. The President accordingly urges the Russian and Japanese Governments, not only for their own sakes, but in the interest of the whole civilised world, to open direct negotiations for peace with one another.

"The President suggests that these peace negotiations should be conducted directly and exclusively between the belligerents; in other words, that there may be a meeting of Russian and Japanese plenipotentiaries or delegates, without any intermediary, in order to see if it is not possible for those representatives of the two Powers to agree to terms of peace. The President earnestly asks that the Russian and Japanese Governments do now agree to such a meeting.

"While the President does not feel that any intermediary should be called in in respect to the peace negotiations themselves, he is entirely willing to do what he properly can, if the two Powers concerned feel that his services will be of aid in arranging the preliminaries as to the time and place of the meeting. But if these preliminaries can be arranged directly between the two Powers or in any other way, the President will be glad, as his sole purpose is to bring about a meeting which the whole civilised world will pray may result in peace."

The world at large was not greatly surprised to hear that this remarkable communication had met with a diplomatic assent, which on the part of Japan was frank and unconditional; on that of Russia general and reserved. It was argued that the courteous acceptance of President Roosevelt's proposal did not commit either side to anything, and that possibly Russia, in particular, might be influenced by the hope of securing a useful armistice. But, as the month wore on, it became clear that at least there was a chance that the President's effort might have some practical results. To reflect at all accurately the varying phases of international opinion during this period would necessitate a lengthy, if interesting, series of references, but for present purposes it may be briefly said that, gradually, the aspect of affairs grew brighter—at any rate, as regards the actual holding of the proposed Conference.

In the case of Japan there was no hitch. Although the Tokio Press expressed grave misgivings as to the genuineness of Russia's assent to Mr. Roosevelt's proposals, the Japanese Government took the situation quite seriously, and in due course Baron Jutaro Komura, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Takahira, Japanese Minister to the United States, were appointed Peace Plenipotentiaries, and on July 6th the former was received in farewell audience by the Mikado in view of his approaching departure for the scene of the Conference. On this day, too, the Mikado issued to the Peace

Plenipotentiaries an address, in which, after alluding to Mr. Roosevelt's intervention, he said :—

"We were compelled, contrary to our expectation, to resort to arms, in spite of our constant and abiding wish for peace, and if, in consequence of the conciliatory spirit of our opponent, hostilities could be brought to an end nothing would be more satisfactory than such a consummation. Accordingly, we at once accepted the suggestion of the President of the United States, and we hereby charge you with the mission of negotiating and concluding peace. You should devote yourselves with all your power to the discharge of your mission, and make every effort to secure the re-establishment of peace on a durable basis."

Particular interest, it may be remarked, was attached to the selection of Baron Komura as Senior Japanese Peace Plenipotentiary. This notable diplomat had been the predecessor of Mr. Takahira as Minister to the United States. Five years previously he had left Washington for St. Petersburg. After serving awhile at the head of the Japanese Legation at the Russian capital he was transferred to Peking, whence he returned to Tokio as Minister for Foreign Affairs. In that capacity he conducted the negotiations which preceded the outbreak of the war, and so carefully did he conceal the policy of his country that at one time he was most harshly criticised by his ardent compatriots for his apparent lack of backbone.

The initial attitude of Russia towards the proposed Peace Conference was not so reassuring as that of Japan. The first Plenipotentiary proposed was M. Nelidoff, the Russian Ambassador in Paris, a nomination which the Japanese openly criticised as indicative of a doubtfully sincere desire to come to terms. Later, the well-known former Minister of Justice, M. Muravieff, was actually appointed Senior Plenipotentiary in conjunction with Baron Rosen. The selection of M. Muravieff, again, called forth strong objections in St. Petersburg, and it was presently stated that his health would not permit him to proceed on such an exhausting errand. About the middle of July the rather startling and very impressive announcement was made that the place of M. Muravieff at the head of the Russian Peace Commission would be taken by M. de Witte. Then for the first time did it seem really possible that Russia would enter upon the proposed Conference with sincerely pacific views. For it was clearly understood that of all public men in Russia there was probably none better inclined to come to terms than M. de Witte, and the fact that the Tsar should finally have had recourse to a statesman whose opposition to the bureaucracy had brought him into Imperial disfavour was of itself regarded as extremely significant.

M. Sergius de Witte was a man of humble origin, the son of a small tradesman, and up to 1877 he was a clerk in a railroad office. During the war with Turkey he came to the front by assisting to reduce the confusion on the lines of communication, and was rewarded by a position in the Government railroad service, subsequently becoming head of the Department. Later he was made Finance Minister, and did wonderful work in establishing a gold standard, introducing revenue reforms, and giving an impetus to industrial development generally. But in 1903 he essayed the more difficult task of constitutional reform, and boldly addressed the Tsar on the subject of militarism and misgovernment. The

bureaucracy joined with the aristocracy in combating this dangerous innovator, and M. de Witte was compelled to exchange his portfolio for a dignified sinecure.

Baron Rosen, the junior Russian Plenipotentiary, was, at the time the Russo-Japanese War broke out, the Russian Minister at Tokio. In that capacity he had become extremely popular with the Japanese Government and people, and when withdrawn in consequence of the rupture of negotiations the Japanese bade him an affectionate and respectful farewell.

A very favourable impression was created by the final nomination of M. de Witte and Baron Rosen as the representatives of Russia at the Conference, which, it was now arranged, should open in August at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, one of the oldest settlements in New England. It was felt that at least the Conference would commence its labours in an atmosphere of personal good will such as could not fail to have a favourable effect upon, at any rate, the preliminary discussion. At the same time it can hardly be said that the prospect of a favourable conclusion was anywhere regarded with much hopefulness. A serious obstacle to any such result was afforded by the fact that naturally the Japanese were indisposed to permit the holding of the Conference to interfere seriously with the prosecution of certain operations more or less directly arising out of their recent grand victory. It is understood that President Roosevelt suggested an armistice, and that some such arrangement would have been welcome to Russia. But Japan on this point was firm, and, as we shall see, proceeded to supplement her success in the Tsu-shima Strait with an important capture of Russian territory, a proceeding which Russia warmly, but without the smallest justification, reprobated as "improper."



RUSSIAN PROTECTED CRUISER *SVETLANA*.

But, in spite of this and other difficulties, the fact remained that a Conference had been arranged, and that, less than two months after Admiral Togo had scattered the last naval hopes of Russia to the winds, well-chosen representatives of the two belligerent nations were on their way to discuss, at the urgent instance of a friendly Power, the possibility of a cessation of hostilities. Such a fact immediately placed the great sea-fight on an entirely different plane. Of relative insignificance were the small happenings immediately subsequent to the collision of the two fleets. Of comparatively small moment now were the lessons to be derived from the engagement by naval enthusiasts. For, amid the smoke and din of that tremendous conflict, one man at least had had the wit to discern the possibility that over the sad scene of so many wrecked hopes, the watery graves of so many gallant sailors, the last resting-place of so many noble ships, there might soon hover the shining wings of the white Angel of Peace.



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CELEBRATING THE GREAT NAVAL VICTORY AT KOBE, JAPAN.

A mimic warship was erected in order to give a touch of realism to the rejoicings.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

INVASION OF SAKHALIN—HISTORICAL NOTE—JAPANESE NAVAL PREPARATIONS—CONQUEST OF THE SOUTHERN PORTION—CAMPAIGN IN THE NORTH—AMUR EXPEDITION—MOVEMENT AGAINST VLADIVOSTOK—ADVANCE FROM KOREA—A NEW STRONGHOLD.

THE Japanese were not slow to take advantage of the naval supremacy so clearly and completely attained by their victory in the Tsu-shima Strait. For months past it had been expected that, sooner or later, the General Staff at Tokio would turn its attention to the Island of Sakhalin, of which some previous mention has been made in this work in connection with the destruction of the Russian cruiser *Novik* off Korsakovsk (see Chapter LII.). But the approach of the Baltic Fleet was a preoccupation sufficiently absorbing to put any such side-issues temporarily out of the question. Not until Rozhdestvensky's armada had been finally disposed of did an invasion of Sakhalin come into the domain of practical politics, and, even then, the presence of the few remaining Russian cruisers at Vladivostok rendered it necessary to use some caution in regard to this interesting and important enterprise.

It has already been briefly stated that Sakhalin was formerly claimed by Japan, but that in 1875 she ceded it to Russia in exchange for the Kurile Islands. In view of the operations about to be described, and of the future status of the territory in question, this definition must now be somewhat expanded. Up to 1853 Sakhalin Island, which lies to the north of Yezo, the Northern Island of Japan, from which it is separated by the Strait of La Pérouse, was regarded as unquestionably under the sovereignty of Japan. That sovereignty, however, was exercised in a rather shadowy fashion, the ruling powers in Japan at that period having but a very vague idea of the actualities and possibilities connected with this, to them, remote corner of the Island Empire.

In 1852 the pushing Russian, Captain Nevelskoy, who had been chiefly instrumental in the occupation of the Amur district, of which Vladivostok became the chief military centre, sent an expedition to explore Sakhalin, and in 1853 he himself circumnavigated it, and established on the south-west coast at Ilinsk a little Russian post consisting of half-a-dozen Russians only. In 1854 a still smaller post was formed on the south-east coast, at a place called, after the famous Governor of Eastern Siberia, Muraviesk. On the strength of these two puny settlements Russia began gradually to assert herself in regard to Sakhalin until, to make a long story short, she found herself able, in 1875, to jockey Japan out of the island altogether. Henceforth Sakhalin was to be regarded purely as Russian territory, and all that Japan received as compensation was a recognition of her right to the Kurile Islands, lying to the north-east of Yezo.

It soon became apparent that Russia,

in this unscrupulous fashion, had laid hands on a very useful and valuable property. Not only was the island strategically important in view of the occupation of the Amur district, but its fisheries were exceedingly productive, and in the interior there were signs of immense mineral wealth. The island, it should be stated, is nearly 700 miles long and from 20 to about 110 miles broad, and it has an area nearly equal to that of Ceylon. Under Russian rule the two chief settlements were Korsakovsk in the south, and Port Alexandrovsk, the capital, which lies on the west coast about 300 miles further north and a little to the south-east of another Alexandrovsk on the mainland, of which Mr. John Foster Fraser gives an interesting description in his "Real Siberia." At the beginning of 1905 there were about 33,000 inhabitants on the island, of whom about 29,000 were Russians, many of them political convicts, the remainder being mostly Ainu aborigines.

Reverting to the Japanese operations against the island, these commenced on June 24th with the swift embarkation on a fleet of transports at Yokohama of a division of all arms under the command of Lieutenant-General Haraguchi. The Japanese authorities were silent as to the object of the expedition, and more than a fortnight elapsed before it was known that ten transports, with an escort of two battleships, seven cruisers, three gunboats, and thirty-six torpedo craft, under command of Admiral Kataoka, had appeared off Korsakovsk, and commenced a smart little campaign of invasion.

The preliminary operations were naval. It had been expected that the Russians, in anticipation of a movement against Sakhalin, would mine Aniwa Bay, in the north-east corner of which Korsakovsk is situated. With the vessels still remaining at their disposal at Vladivostok this was a precaution which the Russians might well have taken, and must be blamed for neglecting. Taking it for granted that the Russians had not failed to prepare a welcome of this kind, the Japanese went about the business of landing very cautiously and methodically. The landing-place they had selected was a point about fourteen miles to the south-east of Sakhalin, and, on the arrival of the expedition, on July 7th, at the entrance to Aniwa Bay, destroyers and torpedo-boats were told off at dawn to drag for mines. No mines having been found, a naval detachment landed, and promptly raised the Japanese flag on a predetermined position. At noon the disembarkation of the troops commenced, and, as soon as they were landed, the soldiers relieved the naval detachment in the occupation of the position. No resistance was encountered, and no mishap occurred.

Meanwhile some of the warships engaged in mine-clearing operations had approached Korsakovsk and come under the fire of a Russian fort to the south of that place, on which a few guns taken from the sunk *Novik* had been mounted. The Russian gunners scored no hits, and the sweeping was satisfactorily completed, Korsakovsk being thus placed at the mercy of the Japanese warship squadron. Further naval co-operation, however, had been rendered almost superfluous by the brisk procedure of the military contingent. Pushing forward from their original position, the troops occupied first another position overlooking Korsakovsk, and then the town itself. For the small Russian garrison had quickly perceived the futility of

a resistance at this point. Their little forts had been silenced by the enemy's warships, and they did not wait to be rushed by Haraguchi's soldiers. Setting fire to the settlement, and abandoning four guns, they withdrew a few miles northward to Soroyofka. On the morning of July 8th the Japanese advanced from Korsakovsk and drove the Russians from Soroyofka to Vladimirofka. By the 10th the latter place and the adjacent region were in the hands of the Japanese, the Russians having retired to Daline, some forty miles to the north of Korsakovsk, where, under Colonel Alexeieff, they prepared to offer an obstinate resistance.

There was some very stiff fighting at Daline on July 11th and 12th. The Russian force consisted of about 500 regulars, with perhaps twice as many volunteers. These occupied a strongly fortified position further defended by six 12-centimetre guns, six 4-centimetre, eight quick-firers, and about a dozen machine guns. Evidently with the assistance of the very best information, the Tokio Correspondent of the *Times* gives an admirably succinct account of the operation and its immediate result. "Great difficulties," he says, "were experienced by the invaders in bringing any considerable force into the fighting line, for the country is covered with dense forests which for centuries have not heard the sound of an axe. Trees, known in Japan as *Ezomatsu* (Ezo pine), grow to a diameter of four feet to five feet, and their intervals are covered so thickly with undergrowth that men can scarcely force a path. The Japanese had three battalions in action, and their strategy was to envelop the enemy on both flanks. A heavy bombardment preceded the onset, but did not seriously injure the Russian entrenchments; for when, at 1.40 a.m., on the 12th, the Japanese made one of the night rushes so much affected by them and generally so successful, they found the outer line of breastworks virtually intact. It was carried nevertheless; but further advance was checked by the fire of the Russians, a fire so withering that forty men out of fifty who led the assault were shot down. Only when a battalion had forced its way through the forest to a position whence the entrenchments could be enfiladed did the enemy abandon his lines, leaving many killed, wounded, and prisoners, as well as four field-pieces and one machine-gun.

"Not yet, however, did he reconcile himself to complete defeat. Some 200 of his men took refuge in the forest, and hotly engaged a company of Japanese infantry before finally retreating with the further loss of two field-guns. Four days later Colonel Alexeieff, who commanded the Korsakovsk district, came to the Japanese lines and surrendered with 200 of his men, bringing the number of prisoners to 407, independently of the wounded. The Governor of Korsakovsk and the civil officials and their families, 163 in all, including 27 women and 35 children, were quickly sent by steamer to Awomorice and then by train to Yokohama, where they were handed over to the French Consul, in accordance with the rule observed by the Japanese throughout the war—namely, not to subject non-combatants to any avoidable inconvenience."

In this engagement the Japanese had about 70 killed and wounded, the Russian loss being more than twice as great. Among the Japanese killed was a brilliant officer, Major Nishikubo, who led the attack at dawn.



THE LAST NAVAL SORTIE FROM PORT ARTHUR.

The victory at Daline virtually gave the Japanese control of the southern portion of Sakhalin, but the conquest of even this part of the island was not absolutely completed until the end of August. Remnants of the Russians had established themselves at various points, and, owing to the difficult nature of the country, it was found extremely troublesome to bring them to book. On August 10th one such detachment which had occupied the Yunaicha Inlet, twenty miles east of Korsakovsk, was successfully tackled by means of combined naval and military operations. A flotilla of pinnaces entered the inlet in the early morning, while troops worked round the eastern shore. After two hours' cannonade the enemy surrendered, to the number of 123. Again, on the 30th, a Japanese force, after much hardship, drove the Russians to the mouth of the Naibuchi River, some 60 miles north of Korsakovsk, and completely routed them after five hours' hard fighting. The Japanese casualties were seven killed and wounded. The Russians had 130 killed.

On July 24th operations were commenced with a view to the conquest of the northern portion of Sakhalin Island. Mention has already been made of Alexandrovsk, the capital of Sakhalin, which is a town of 400 houses and 2,000 inhabitants, the residence of the Governor, Lieutenant-General Liapunoff, and a cable station. On July 23rd a Japanese squadron was sighted off Alexandrovsk, and by evening on the following day the town was in Japanese occupation.

The operations were very similar to those at Korsakovsk as regards the dragging for mines and the preliminary naval landing followed by military occupation. But in the case of Alexandrovsk three points were simultaneously attacked on the 24th—the sea-front at Alexandrovsk itself, Alkova, a port thirteen miles to the north, and Mugati, another port seven miles to the north of Alkova. The sharpest resistance was encountered at Alkova, where the Russians, to the number of 2,000, were waiting in an entrenched position. The guns of the Japanese warships soon rendered the entrenchments untenable, and a few hours later a Japanese military force drove the Russians into the interior. Meanwhile, at Mugati another party had landed and captured 40,000 tons of coal, while a third force had taken possession of the wharf at Alexandrovsk, frustrating several Russian attacks and attempts to burn it. About seven in the evening of the 24th, the Alkova force, having pursued the enemy for a short distance into the interior, occupied a line covering its landing place, and then marched on Alexandrovsk, which was promptly occupied, the Russians retiring to a redoubt east of the town, from which they were driven the following morning. On the 25th, too, the town of Dui, lying four or five miles to the south of Alexandrovsk, and containing about 1,000 houses, was occupied in time to save it from being burned by the Russians.

It is very characteristic of Japanese thoroughness and caution that, while this combined movement against Alexandrovsk was taking place, attention was being paid to the opposite mainland. In the early afternoon of July 24th a Japanese squadron proceeded to Castries Bay, occupied the Krestacamp lighthouse, and hoisted the Japanese flag, with a view rather, it would seem, to cutting the communication between Sakhalin and the mainland than with an idea of obtaining for the present a foothold on the latter. Still, as the

first landing on what was indisputably Russian mainland, the operation has some particular interest, a little heightened for British readers since Castries Bay was the scene of an interesting, if unsuccessful, British naval performance in 1855.

After evacuating Alkova, Mugati, Dui, and Alexandrovsk, the Russians retired some forty miles into the interior to Rykoff, where once more they prepared to offer an obstinate resistance. Their force numbered 5,000, with eight field and four machine guns. The Japanese had followed quickly on the heels of the fugitives from the coast, and had wisely taken steps to prevent a further retreat into the difficult country to the north of the island. To this end they had dispatched the Alkova force to the north of Rykoff, while the troops from Alexandrovsk marched direct on the place from the west. With the Alkova force were several squadrons of cavalry, and so smartly was this plan of cutting the line of retreat carried out that the Japanese horsemen rode down upon Rykoff from the north on the evening of the 26th. The place, however, was too strongly held to permit of its capture by a *coup de main* of this kind, and, moreover, the hilly country to the west of the town known as Weidernikovsky was also occupied in force. Accordingly the attack was deferred until 3 a.m. on the 27th, when the whole of the Alkova force burst into Rykoff and, after a fierce house-to-house fight, cleared the place of its defenders by 8.30 a.m. Meanwhile the Russians on the Weidernikovsky highlands had at first made a vigorous stand against the Alexandrovsk force advancing from the west, and had inflicted on it some loss by means of an ingenious arrangement of dummy and masked batteries. Thinking they had silenced the former, the Japanese advanced, to be received with a hot fire from hidden guns. However, the pressure was too great, and during the night of the 26th-27th this position was also abandoned, the Russians flying southwards to Paleo. Here their rearguard, 800 strong, was overtaken by the pursuing Japanese, and practically annihilated, 200 being killed and 500 surrendering.



Photo: Copyright, 1905, by H. C. White Co., London.

JAPAN'S TENDER CARE FOR HER WOUNDED.

A patient whose thigh has been shattered supported by a pulley sling whilst the bandages are being changed.

On the morning of the 28th the Russians were again overtaken by the Japanese cavalry and severely handled, losing two field-guns and many rifles. The remainder of the operation is best described in the words of the *Times* correspondent at Tokio. "On the following morning (29th) the pursuit was resumed, and the Russians being forced past Tauran (25 miles from Rykoff), continued their flight for another 25 miles, halting finally at Onoru. This long pursuit, which may be said to have begun on the 24th and lasted with little intermission until the 29th, was now to end finally. The Russians found themselves in a desperate plight. They had still ample stores of provisions and ammunition, but their wounded were suffering terribly, and to continue the flight would be to enter a zone of still greater danger. At 5 a.m. on the 30th an officer with a flag of truce rode into the Japanese lines at Tauran and delivered a despatch from Lieutenant-General Liapunoff, Military Governor of Sakhalin. It was a brief document. The general merely said that, being devoid of all means of caring for his wounded, feelings of humanity compelled him to solicit a cessation of fighting. The Japanese commander replied nearly as curtly. He prescribed two conditions — first, that all material of war and all Government property should be handed over as it existed; and, secondly, that all the archives of the military and civil administration should be given up. 'If these terms were accepted by 10 p.m. on the following day (31st), the fighting should end; if not, it should recommence immediately.'

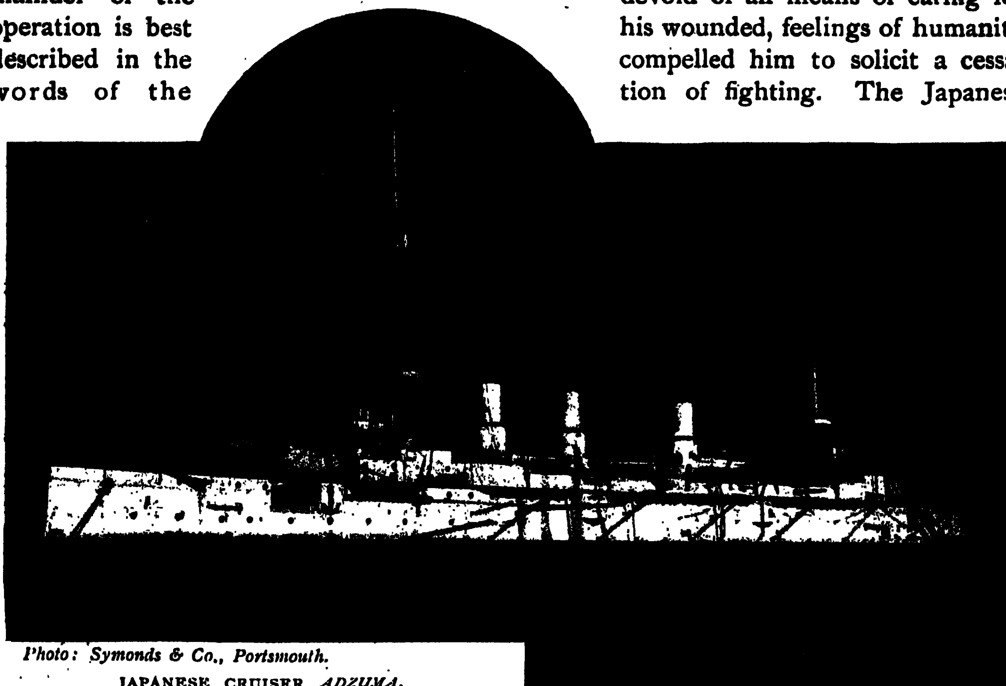


Photo: Symonds & Co., Portsmouth.
JAPANESE CRUISER *ADZUMA.*

"By this time the Japanese van was at Hamdasa, five miles north of Ondru. There Colonel Dubitch arrived on the 31st, bringing unqualified acceptance of the Japanese terms; and subsequently General Liapunoff, 70 officers, and 3,200 rank and file came in and surrendered.

The whole campaign had occupied seven days, and the distance traversed in the fighting had been about 100 miles. It was certainly a record operation in point of speed, and the use of cavalry as mounted infantry distinguished it from other chapters in the war's history."

Thus ended the conquest of Sakhalin, and certainly, from the naval and military standpoints, nothing could have been more brilliantly conclusive. At first it seemed that the political result would be equally definite, since the Japanese lost no time in asserting their control over the island, and making arrangements for the civil administration and the regulation of the fisheries. But the future of Sakhalin was to be one of the surprises of this most surprising war, and practically the whole of what had been effected in the northern part of the island in the eventful week which ended on July 31st was to be nullified by a very remarkable diplomatic process to be described hereafter. None the less, the story of the Sakhalin expedition is one of extreme interest and instructiveness, and, for its size, the campaign is perhaps as perfect an example of naval and military co-operation as can possibly be quoted.

In continuation of the excellent work he had done in connection with the Sakhalin expedition, Admiral Kataoka now proceeded to extend the performances of his fleet in several interesting directions. Squadrons were detached for operations



Photo : Copyright, 1905, by H. C. White Co., London.

JAPANESE MOUNTAIN BATTERY READY FOR ACTION.

on the Okhotsk and Kamchatka coasts, and on August 13th a Russian transport was captured in the harbour of Petropavlosk. Four days later a Japanese squadron entered the harbour of Okhotsk, and carried off some rifles and ammunition. Even more significant than these instances of the freedom of action now enjoyed by the winners of the battle of the Sea of Japan was a striking naval demonstration at the mouth of the Amur, where the highly important Russian town of Nikolaievsk is situated. The result of the peace negotiations deprives this movement of much of the interest which would unquestionably have been attached to it had hostilities been allowed to continue for another three months. But no record of the war would be complete without a passing glance at a development clearly intended by the Japanese to form an entirely new phase of the operations both by sea and land.

For at this point we begin to see the Japanese plans of operations against the Amur district in general, and Vladivostok in particular, taking shape in very impressive fashion. Roughly speaking, it would appear that this plan was based on a process of envelopment even more precise and comprehensive than those formulated for the benefit of the Russians at Port Arthur, Liao-yang, and Mukden respectively. What was evidently foreshadowed was the subjection of Vladivostok to combined pressure not only from the sea, but from forces operating from the north, west, and south simultaneously. The northern attack would presumably have been preceded by the occupation of Nikolaievsk and Khabarovsk; that from the west would have been delivered by a force detached from Oyama's main army; while the pressure from the south would, of course, have been supplied by troops which already, for some months, had been moving up from Korea.

As to the Amur expedition, it is unnecessary to speculate further. The possibility of a movement on the part of one of Oyama's armies against Vladivostok is another matter which does not call for detailed treatment here, since the movement in question was only beginning to be apparent when the peace negotiations nipped in the bud even such conjectures as the continued secrecy surrounding the Japanese dispositions allowed. But the advance on Vladivostok from the south was more plainly indicated, and had, indeed, been in more or less active progress for four or five months past.

The Japanese forces in Korea had since October, 1904, been under the command of General Hasegawa, formerly commanding the Imperial Guards Division. One of General Hasegawa's first acts on taking over his post was to issue a proclamation placing under military government the whole province of Ham-yeng, where the Cossacks had been raiding for some time past, and in the spring of 1905 the Japanese commander appears to have concentrated in the northern portion of Korea an army amply large enough to deal with the 30,000 Russians said to be distributed in the space between the Tumen River and Vladivostok. For a time the Japanese were content to hold the country to the south of the Tumen in sufficient strength to preclude any attempt on the part of the Russians to carry out their old idea of making a diversion by means of a great raid into Korea. But, after the destruction of the Baltic Fleet, a forward policy was adopted and a steady advance commenced. This operation had reached a very interesting stage, and a sharp

collision on a large scale seemed imminent, when the peace negotiations robbed Japan in this, as in several other quarters, of the fruits of much elaborate and thoughtful preparation. The fighting in Korea, it may be remembered, continued until the first week in September, the latest happening recorded being a small success admitted by General Liniévitch to have been scored by the Japanese on September 3rd.

As regards communications by sea, an effort had been made by the Japanese early in 1905 to establish a blockade of Vladivostok, and during February there were many seizures of vessels attempting to run coal and other contraband into the Golden Horn. But, as the Baltic Fleet approached, the blockade seems to have been somewhat relaxed, doubtless owing to Admiral Togo's anxiety to have as many cruisers as possible at his disposal for scouting purposes. Moreover, when the ice disappears, the maintenance of a blockade of a place like Vladivostok presents, as has been previously explained, peculiar difficulties. At the time of the great battle of the Sea of Japan, no particular effort seems to have been made to block the actual entrances to the harbour, and the fugitive Russian cruiser *Almaz* experienced no difficulty in making the port.

The Russians were under no illusions as to the probable fate of Vladivostok, assuming that the war continued to run its course. As soon as Port Arthur had fallen, renewed efforts were made to render Vladivostok a still more difficult stronghold, and no precaution appears to have been omitted in the way of fortification, equipment, and provisioning. About the middle of February, 1905, the fortress was declared to be in a state of siege, and the acting commandant was invested with all the powers of a Commander-in-Chief as regards the civil population. In March it was announced that six submarines had either reached or were on the point of reaching Vladivostok. In April a sensational telegram received at St. Petersburg announced that five Japanese officers disguised as navvies had been caught photographing the defences, and had been summarily hanged. Cold comfort, however, must have been afforded by the latter proceeding, since documents found in the possession of the spies showed that they had already sent full information as to the defences to Tokio.

In May, a reconnaissance with torpedo craft was made by Captain Baron Raden, who succeeded in capturing a couple of Japanese schooners. Later in the month, Admiral Bireleff was posted to the command of the Russian naval force in the Pacific, with headquarters at Vladivostok (see page 133 of the present volume), but the result of the Battle of the Sea of Japan naturally put an abrupt end to any hopes that may have arisen from this appointment. After that decisive sea-fight the defence of Vladivostok became almost entirely a military question, and on July 25th an Order of the Day was issued by General Liniévitch subordinating "all the naval crews and the other men employed in the navy yards, including detachments from certain cruisers," to the military commandant. A little later, in view of imminent isolation, martial law was proclaimed, and the bulk of the civilian population left Vladivostok hurriedly for Blagovestchensk and Khabarobsk.

Some interesting details are available of the state of the Vladivostok fortifications towards the end of August, 1905. By this time, after eighteen months' work, the fortress had completely



cnanged its aspect. It was surrounded by a triple line of works, and at certain important spots there were four lines of detence, the exterior line being carried to a distance of eight and a half miles from the town in order to protect the latter from bombardment. The islands to the south had been carefully fortified, and five important forts had been constructed to the north. The total strength of the troops available for the defence was reckoned at 85,000 men ; there were reported to be 2,000 guns in the place, each with 1,000 rounds ; there were 400,000,000 rifle cartridges in store ; and the food supply was sufficient to last two years.

Seldom in history has peace intervened to frustrate more deliberate and comprehensive preparations for attack on the one side and defence on the other, and, putting considerations of humanity out of the question, there is little doubt that, if these tremendous efforts had in due course been put to the practical test, some warlike lessons might have been learnt of far greater value than the few afforded by the fall of Port Arthur itself.



GENERAL ANDREEF.
Commander-in-Chief at Vladivostok.

CHAPTER XCIX.

THE POST-TIE-LING OPERATIONS—KUROPATKIN AND LINIÉVITCH—GEOGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS—THE JAPANESE PLAN—DESULTORY FIGHTING—AN ANNIVERSARY—MINOR ENGAGEMENTS—INFLUENCE OF THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.

THE operations in Manchuria subsequent to the occupation of Tie-ling constitute rather a strange mixture of conflicting attributes. From several standpoints they are extremely interesting, so much so, indeed, that the situation led up to promised to be in the highest degree dramatic. Geographically, strategically, and humanly speaking, the position was full of attractive points, and, though the proceedings were of a rather dragged-out description, there is nothing in the previous history of the war more calculated to arrest attention than the prospect at one time revealed of a combined envelopment of Harbin and an isolation of Vladivostok.

But such a thrilling termination to the last act of the drama was not to be. The closing movements on the warlike stage were to be checked by diplomatic intervention, resulting, as we shall see, in the lowering of the curtain somewhat unexpectedly on a peaceful tableau. In these circumstances the operations in Manchuria from the fall of Tie-ling to the end of the war naturally lose the greater part of their interest for all but the professional student, and a long story of intermittent fighting, extending over nearly six months, may be conveniently, and with fair regard for historical propriety, compressed within the limits of one short chapter.

In Chapter XCIII. we left the Japanese pursuing the Russians northward from Tie-ling, and mention was made of the fact that, as one result of the Battle of Mukden, Kuropatkin was deprived of the chief command of the Russian troops in the Far East, General Liniévitch being appointed by the Tsar to take his place. A few interesting details concerning this remarkable supersession may now be added in view of the close connection between the strategy of the remaining months of the war and the changed personality of the Russian Commander-in-Chief.

Of the unfortunate Kuropatkin it is sufficient to say that, having conducted the retirement beyond Tie-ling to what he considered to be a secure position for his retreating army, he left the front for Harbin, whence it was understood that he was proceeding to St. Petersburg. It is said that the Tsar at first refused Kuropatkin's request to be allowed to remain, like Canrobert in the Crimea, in a subordinate position with the field army, but that at the instance of General Liniévitch he relented, and allowed Kuropatkin to retrace his steps from Harbin, and to take up forthwith the command of the First Army, which Liniévitch had now vacated. It is pleasant to be able to add that, both on his departure from Harbin and his return to headquarters, Kuropatkin received a notable ovation

from the soldiers whom he had led with such doubtful success, but who were still able to appreciate his real worth.

Of "Papa" Liniévitch, the "Manchurian Wolf," now at the height of his ambition as Commander-in-Chief, some details have been previously given. Unfortunately, in some respects, the period about to be described did not afford any sort of conclusive proof as to whether the substitution of this "Soldiers' General" for a man of Kuropatkin's calibre was justified. To the majority of expert critics it will probably appear that, if the war had run its course, there is every likelihood that Liniévitch would have met with disaster even more comprehensive and far more decisive than that which overtook his predecessor. There was nothing in his strategy, or in such tactical dispositions as arose out of it, to induce the belief that Liniévitch, any more than Kuropatkin, would be able to cope with a system of envelopment which the Japanese would now have carried out with largely augmented forces. On the other hand, it stands to the older General's credit that he not only succeeded in pulling together the Russian armies after a highly demoralising retreat, but that for several months he maintained a bold front without any such reverse as that which Kuropatkin encountered in the Battle of the Sha-ho, or any such untoward complication as that which led to the serious fiasco of Hei-kou-tai. For the rest, a not unpleasing central figure in this last stage of the land fighting is provided by the venerable Russian Commander-in-Chief, whose soldierly jest about the lameness that hindered his movement in any but a forward direction links him with another veteran—good old "immer vorwärts" Blucher—whom this country holds in grateful recollection.

Turning from these personal details, it is necessary to devote some little attention to the geographical conditions under which the Russian retreat from Tie-ling, and the subsequent operations of both armies, were conducted. As in the case of the immediate sequel to the Battle of Mukden, the best authority on the topography of the region in question is an anonymous correspondent of the *Times*, who has evidently traversed it with a seeing eye. From him we learn that, on leaving Tie-ling, the Russians had to struggle through the Kai-yuan Plain, which is thirty miles from south to north, and widens from less than three miles at Tie-ling to about twenty at its northern end.

Kai-yuan City stands in the centre of the widest part, twenty-three miles from Tie-ling. Northward of Kai-yuan the ground rises rapidly into the central table-lands. The railway winds up into these, and then follows the lower sections to Chang-tu station, which lies ten miles east of the town of the same name. The latter is a place of importance, having some 20,000 inhabitants. The railway from Chang-tu passes through a well-cultivated region until, at a hundred miles from Tie-ling, the large station and engine works of Gun-tzu-ling (variously spelt Kun-tu-leng and Kunjulin) are reached.

To the west of the railway hereabouts lies Feng-wa (or Mai-mai-kai), a very important trading and grain centre, through which runs an important road southward to Chang-tu and Kai-yuan, and northward to Chang-chun. The latter lies in the midst of a beautiful undulating country, through which the railway, leaving Chang-chun on the right, runs up in a north-easterly direction to Harbin. This region is described as one of magnificent

rolling uplands and wide level valleys, all under high-class cultivation. "Farmsteads dot the country, hidden in groves of trees, and all along the main roads are towns, villages, and huge caravanserais. . . . The farmers have large numbers of sturdy mules and ponies, with strong carts built for carrying merchandise great distances. North of Kai-yuan one rarely sees the mixed teams of donkeys and cows common in the Liao Plain." These details are of interest and importance, as indicating the fact that during the last stage of the land fighting the Russian army was operating in by no means an inhospitable or unproductive country.

Leaving the railway and the parts adjacent, and returning to Tie-ling, we have to take note of two "mandarin roads," which are quite apart from the trade route described above as running between Tie-ling and Chang-chun. One of these lies away to the west of the rail, and leads from Peking to Petune on the Sungari, about 100 miles west of Harbin. The other mandarin road, with which we are more immediately concerned, leads from Tie-ling past Kai-yuan, through I-tung to Kirin, some 240 miles north-east of Tie-ling. "This has for ages been an important military route, and the road is fairly good and passable at all seasons, with several rivers of fine water, all easily fordable. Kirin is a very important place, with stores of grain, a fine modern arsenal and powder mills, easily accessible coalfields, and an unlimited fuel supply." Enormous rafts come here from the forests higher up the Sungari, and Harbin is almost entirely supplied with timber and fuel from Kirin City. The surrounding hills . . . . are admirable for defence." From Kirin, roads run in a north-westerly direction to Chang-chun, and westward, through Omoso, to Vladivostok. During the winter of 1904-5, moreover, the Russians had connected Kirin with the Manchurian Railway by a rough field line joining the latter a little north of Chang-chun.



Photo: Copyright, 1905, by H. C. White Co., London.
SCENE IN A JAPANESE TEMPORARY HOSPITAL.

If the reader will keep in mind the foregoing details when studying the map, and will further pay attention to the course of the Sungari River, he will be able to grasp the significance of the operations subsequent to the fall of Tie-ling with very little difficulty. In particular he will understand at once why it was im-

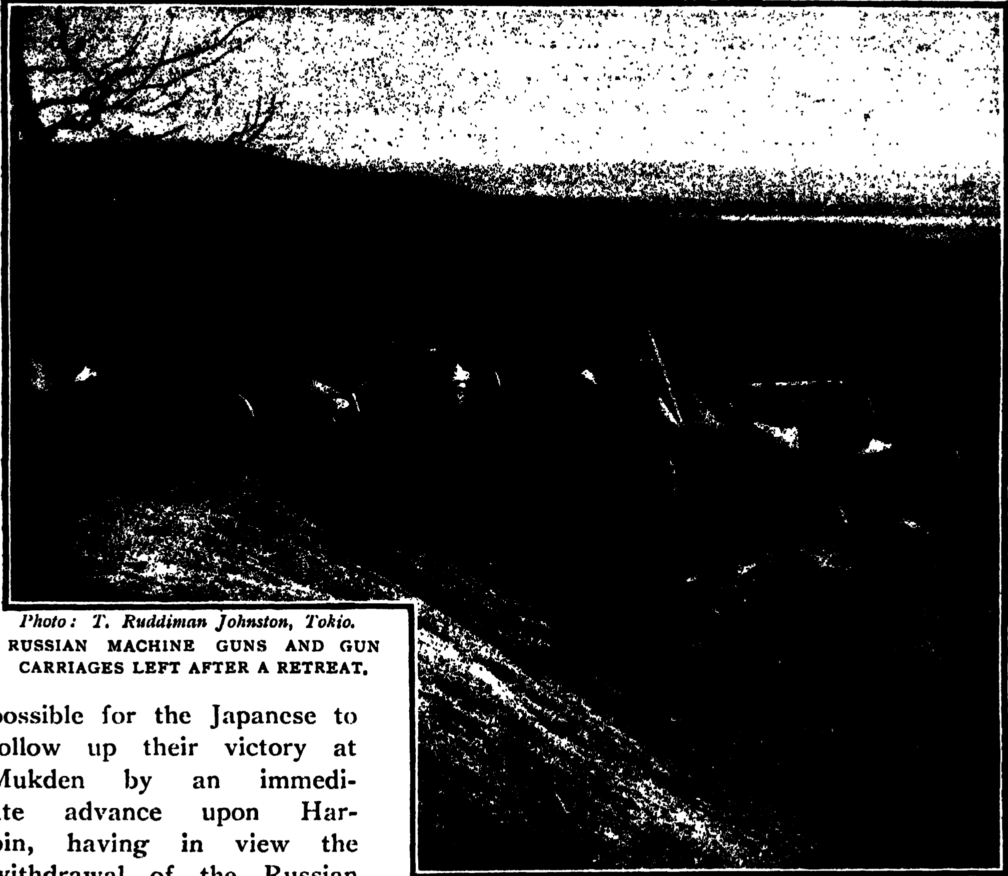


Photo: T. Ruddiman Johnston, Tokio.
RUSSIAN MACHINE GUNS AND GUN CARRIAGES LEFT AFTER A RETREAT.

possible for the Japanese to follow up their victory at Mukden by an immediate advance upon Harbin, having in view the withdrawal of the Russian forces to a country in many respects favourable for defence, and sufficiently productive to furnish large quantities of supplies. Quite apart from the bare chance that Admiral Rozhdestvensky's approaching squadron might succeed in wresting from Admiral Togo the command of the sea, and so render further penetration into Manchuria a rather risky proceeding, the maintenance of a resolute front by the Russians in the region to the south of Chang-chun and Kirin could not but necessitate considerable caution on the part of the Japanese, for whom the war was now beginning to assume a totally new aspect.

The first thing to remember in connection with the post-Mukden stage of the operations on land is this: The Japanese had twice endeavoured to compass the annihilation of the Russian forces by envelopment, and on both occasions had failed to accomplish their object. Obviously this was not the result of careless strategy or of want of energy and capacity on the part of either the Japanese leaders or their men. The simple fact was, that the armies of Oyama, large, magnificently constituted, and splendidly mobile as they were, had positively not been big enough to enclose the not very inferior armies of

Kuropatkin, and, unless a different result could be secured with the forces henceforth under the command of Liniévitch, much of the vitality of Japan would be expended in fruitless effort. For merely to beat the Russians without inflicting on them a really paralysing blow, would be to play the Russian game of letting things go on until the victor in the first stages of the conflict should become exhausted.

Accordingly, after the occupation of Tie-ling, the Japanese pursued the Russians first to Kai-yuan and then to Chang-tu, and, having made good their foothold in these places, sat down to prepare for another operation on a scale still vaster than any on which they had worked hitherto. They had now to provide for the envelopment of a force by no means disadvantageously based on Harbin itself, and with this performance, assuming that Togo satisfactorily accounted for the bulk of Admiral Rozhdestvensky's fleet, the movement against Vladivostok, which was foreshadowed in the last chapter, would have to be combined.

For this tremendous operation, Japan had now no fewer than six armies available. On the extreme left was the army of Port Arthur, numerically the Fourth Army, under Nogi. Next came the Second Army, under Oku; then the Third Army, under Nozu; and the First Army, under Kuroki. Away on the Japanese right, and working up from the Shin-king district—Shin-king is about 60 miles east of Mukden—upon Kirin was the Army of the Yalu (Fifth Army), under Kawamura, and, concentrating in the north of Korea, preparatory to a move across the Tumen on Vladivostok, was a Sixth Army under Lieutenant-General Baron Hasegawa. In the last chapter we saw indications of an expeditionary force to be landed at the mouth of the Amur, which might ultimately have developed into a Seventh Army for operations against Vladivostok from the north, as a sequel to the Sakhalin Expedition.

Even apart from these two supplementary movements last mentioned, the Japanese dispositions were sufficiently imposing, and their impressiveness was soon to be vastly increased by the rapid and copious process of reinforcement adopted after the Battle of Mukden. Thanks to the indefatigable energy displayed at home in drilling recruits throughout the winter, Japan's armies in the field were soon to rise to a total of some 700,000 men; while, towards the end of the last phase, she must have been able to dispose of something very nearly approaching a million!

As against this well-ordered, multitudinous, and increasing array, Russia, as we have seen, had, after the Battle of Mukden, not more than about 300,000 to 350,000 of badly-beaten troops. But these, in spite of the embarrassments and confusion attendant upon such a retreat, were soon pulled together by Liniévitch, and lost no time in entrenching themselves south of Chang-chun, some forty miles to the north-east of Chang-tu. By the end of March they had pushed forward a little with the clear intention to dispute every inch of the railway and of the mandarin road to Kirin. As a sequel to the appointment of Liniévitch to the Chiefship and of Kuropatkin to the command of the First Russian Army, a change was now made in the leading of the Second and Third Armies. It will be remembered that at the close of Chapter XCII. the writer was moved to criticise unfavourably the haphazard manner in which General Bilderling had conducted his retirement. Apparently the

same view was taken in St. Petersburg, since towards the end of March, General Bilderling was deprived of his command, and General Batianoff, an officer over 70 years of age and a member of the War Board at St. Petersburg, was appointed to the Third Army, General Kaulbars being retained in command of the Second. Two other Russian military changes took place in Manchuria towards the end of March. General Stackelberg went home invalided, and General Sakharoff, having had differences of opinion with General Liniévitch, was succeeded as Chief of the Staff by General Kharkevitch, formerly Quartermaster-General.

Early in April the Russian headquarters were at Gun-tzu-ling, already mentioned as being on the railway about 100 miles from Tie-ling. The Japanese had thrown forward reconnoitring parties from Chang-tu, and outpost encounters took place, but in the Chang-tu quarter things did not show much movement. Rather better progress was made by a Japanese column working gradually up the mandarin road towards Kirin, and by the middle of April Kawamura, on the Japanese right, had arrived at a point fifty miles north of Shin-king.

On April 24th General Liniévitch made a determined attack in three columns on the Japanese posted in the Chang-tü and Kai-yuan districts, 11 Russian battalions, 32 squadrons, and two batteries being engaged. The chief encounter took place near Kai-yuan, where the Russians attacked with 5 battalions, 16 squadrons, and a battery. The Japanese, however, promptly outflanked the enemy, and drove them back in confusion. The Japanese casualties were 38, but the Russians left 200 dead, and their other two columns retreated without pressing home their attacks.

An extract from a telegram despatched by the war correspondent of the Paris *Matin* gives an interesting if, perhaps, somewhat one-sided picture of the conditions prevailing to the north of Tie-ling during April :—

"I have just arrived from the front, where I was the guest of General Kaulbars. My impression is that the Russian Army, now reinforced, has pulled itself together and is again ready to accept battle. Everywhere along the front there are daily manœuvres in which the troops are exercised in battle formations based upon the lessons derived from the present war. There is also great activity elsewhere. Mishtchenko's cavalry, which is very busy, scours the country as far as Chang-tu-fu, where it has fought several successful engagements. The prisoners captured in these engagements, cavalrymen whom I saw, had sabre wounds in the head. The Japanese cavalry, which is operating at a distance of scarcely ten kilomètres in advance of the Japanese army, refuses battle and promptly seeks shelter behind the infantry."

May 1st, being the anniversary of the Battle of the Yalu, was made by General Kuroki's army the occasion of a notable celebration. Not only were religious services held in memory of the dead, but spectacular fêtes were organised, processions carried out, and stage performances enacted with a whole-hearted thoroughness and *abandon* pleasantly typical of the lighter side of the Japanese character. A quaint air of homeliness was lent to the celebration by the transformation of the valley in which the headquarters were situated into the similitude of a Japanese park. The *Times* correspondent with the First Japanese Army gave a delightful account of this memorable day, from which we may borrow the

following paragraphs descriptive of part of the proceedings following on the Shinto ritual. Of the latter, an account was given at a much earlier stage of the war (Chapter XL.) :—



Photo: Copyright, 1905, by H. C. White Co., London.
GENERAL BARON KUROKI AT HIS HEADQUARTERS IN MANCHURIA.

"When the troops marched away and stacked their rifles the festivities began. A procession came out of the village. It was led by a troop of cavalry dressed as samurai warriors, with the scales of their armour cut from gilded biscuit tins. The warriors had their improvised two-handed swords, their quivers of arrows, and their helmets swung over their shoulders, just as they are in the drawings which have become a part of the art treasures of the world. That quiet-spoken commander of the most matter-of-fact of armies (whose officers, even after all their victories, have no swagger) once wore this equipment and was reared in its school. But when he changed to a khaki blouse he rid himself of the old-fashioned notions that went with the cuirass. We occidentals, who owe our change to gradual evolution, still maintain many prejudices which in all our armies clog the wheels of efficiency.

"If the General would not have felt at home in these days in a samurai armour, there is no gainsaying the fact that he felt very much at home when he was watching the wrestling of his soldiers turned actors in classic plays. A nation may not get a new set of folk lore stories, or classic heroes, or a new expression of art which is natural to it in a day. This army that fights in a European way and wears European clothes enjoyed itself in a thoroughly Japanese way. After the

samurai cavalry came the floats, expressive each in its way of some idea, as a man with a scythe or a woman with scales is to us. Soldiers had made up as samurai, retainers, scholars, pilgrims, priests, artisans, farmers, and coolies of the Japanese world, with shaven heads were more like those of the soldier on the march rather than the mincing steps of tea-house girls. There were Chinese women, too; and the foreign world was not forgotten. Miss Jones, of Nagasaki, with a red blouse, two big red bows on her white skirt, and a dream of a bonnet



Photo: Copyright, 1905, by H. C. White Co., London.

BUSY TIMES AT TIE-LING.

Japanese soldiers and Chinese coolies are here seen transferring the stores brought up by rail from the base on to the innumerable handcarts which have kept in daily communication with the armies at the front and supplied them with all necessaries and equipment.

and little top knot queues. With wigs of their own fashioning, and their faces powdered, and beflowered kimonas, they played the part of women, whose strides made by the foremost milliner of Piau-chi-tun, was most capricious, if not entirely captivating, in her femininity. There was a foreign minister with a high hat,

a frock coat, eye-glasses, and cane, and a profound foreign air, who had made up his eyes and nose to give an occidental impression. But he was not too dignified to join in the dances and the games of one of the companies of strolling players to which he belonged.

"From ten in the morning until dark, officers and men threw themselves into the sport with the *abandon* of the confetti throwers at Mardi Gras. Luncheon was served in the pine grove on long wooden tables laden with Japanese dainties. The beefsteak booth was a novelty which we owe to the Russians, who in their retreat could not drive away their herds of cattle. A huge beer-bottle made of paper and matting advertised afar the particular brand which made Asahi famous; for the Japanese are becoming a beer-drinking nation. Elsewhere was a field post-office, where everyone who applied might have a special anniversary day postcard and post it on the spot. This was the busiest booth of all. The Japanese soldier is a famous letter-writer. Those little pieces of pasteboard were sent back by thousands to Japan, to tell the folks at home and friends of the glorious time the authors were having."

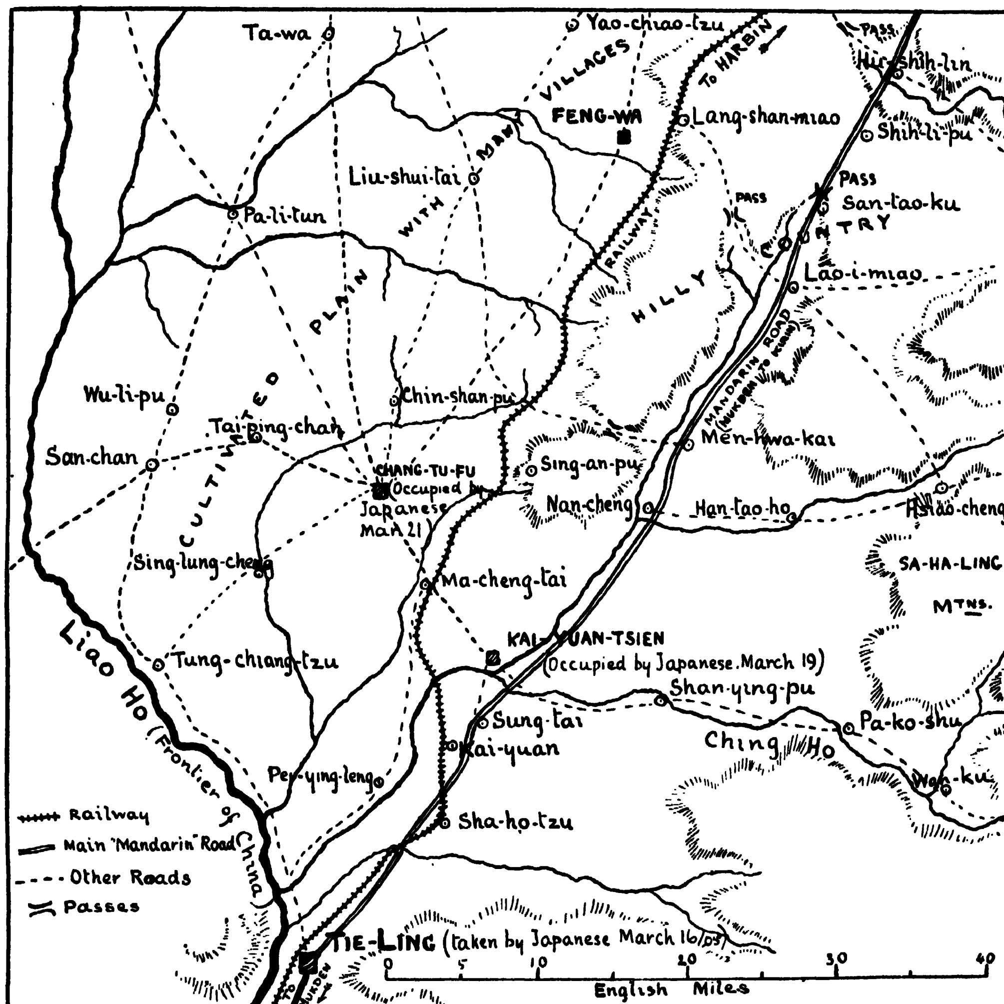
During the greater part of May the opposing armies displayed only occasional activity; but in the latter half of the month the situation assumed a somewhat brisker aspect, and there was smart fighting at various points. The Russian line must now have been about forty miles in length, stretching from the west of the railway, near Feng-wa, to a point about fifty miles south of Kirin, where one division was placed. Screened by the infantry and artillery on the Russian right, Mishtchenko's cavalry lay in readiness on the bank of the Liao. The line to the east was carried on by the Second Army under Kaulbars, and the left was constituted by the First Army under Kuropatkin. Many reinforcements had been received, and the hills north of Kirin were being busily fortified. At the close of the third week in May a cavalry raid was carried by Mishtchenko, and magnified by Russian accounts into a brilliant success. But a study of the details subsequently available makes it evident that, apart from some destruction of property and a minor engagement, the work accomplished was insignificant, and that, moreover, the result came near to serious disaster. For the Japanese very nearly succeeded in intercepting the Russian force on its return journey, and the Japanese cavalry actually did punish Mishtchenko's rearguard of two squadrons very severely.

The situation in Manchuria during June was, of course, essentially modified by the result of the Battle of the Sea of Japan. Henceforth the Japanese could push forward their advance on land with perfect confidence, and there is no question that, but for the intervention of the peace negotiations, the operations from this point would have displayed a pretty continuous record of Japanese progress, tending to the complete development of the great double movement foreshadowed in the earlier part of this Chapter. A significant step in this direction was, indeed, taken almost on the morrow of the great sea-fight. A little way back it was mentioned that from Kirin a road runs westward to Vladivostok through a place called Omoso. At the end of the first week in June the Japanese cavalry, as the result of a brilliant raid, entered Omoso and burnt 40 tons of grain. This performance created a profound impression in St. Petersburg and elsewhere, since it brought into strong relief the

practical certainty that a continuance of the war would mean the simultaneous isolation of Vladivostok and envelopment of Harbin at a very early date.

Commander-in-Chief telegraphed from Gun-tzu-ling to the Tsar the following despatch:—

"Immediately on learning of the offer



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE PURSUIT AFTER MUKDEN (MARCH, 1905) AND THE OPERATIONS NORTH OF TIE-LING IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER FOLLOWING.

In the middle of June the news of President's Roosevelt's interposition with the object of securing a peaceful settlement was carried to the Russian Army in Manchuria, and evoked a remarkable protest from General Liniévitch. The aged

of President Roosevelt's good offices, and your consent to the opening of peace negotiations, I called a Council of War of all the generals at present at headquarters. I have the honour to inform your Majesty that all my comrades and

myself, after fully discussing the arguments for peace and the respective positions of the opposing armies, unanimously and resolutely voted for the continuation of the war until such time as the Almighty shall crown the efforts of our brave troops with success. It is no time to talk of peace after the battles of Mukden and of Tsushima. Flushed with success the enemy cannot fail to exact dishonouring terms which there is absolutely no reason that we should grant, for we are not quite reduced to such straits yet. The disaster of Tsushima is undoubtedly regrettable, but it in no way affects our brave army, which is in fine condition now, and burns with desire to revenge itself upon the enemy by a success which, I have every reason to hope, is now close at hand.

"We occupy an admirably fortified position. The wet weather has hitherto prevented me from taking the offensive, but now that our losses at Mukden have not only been made good, but that we have been reinforced by a fresh Army Corps from Europe, I feel myself able to do more than hold my own against the enemy. Indeed, I hope, before the month is out, to take the offensive and change completely the complexion of affairs. I beg to repeat, therefore, that your Majesty can have every confidence in the force and strength of our troops. I again affirm that our position is in no way of such a critical nature as to necessitate the conclusion of peace on terms unfavourable for Russia."

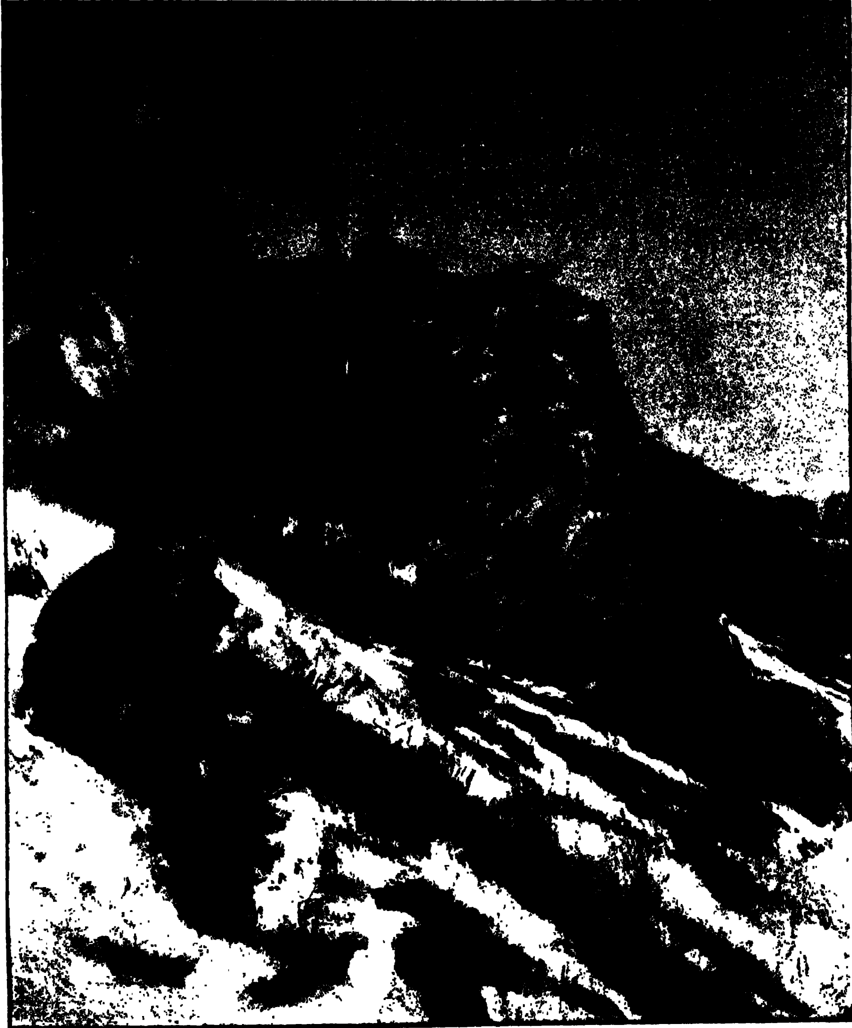
Although the actual circumstances would hardly seem to justify the cheery optimism of "Papa" Liniévitch, it is impossible not to admire the excellent spirit displayed by this pugnacious veteran, more especially as there is not a shadow of a doubt as to his complete sincerity, and his rugged determination to keep on fighting as long as he had a gun or a soldier left.

Among the Japanese troops the possibility of peace negotiations was regarded dispassionately. "The Spartan attitude of the army towards duty" was in no way modified by the chance of returning home after such an arduous campaign, and everywhere an enthusiastic willingness to continue all necessary sacrifices was observable.

On June 16th, the Japanese, learning that Mishtchenko was contemplating a large outflanking operation, forestalled it by a vigorous attack against the Russians to the west of the railway. The Russians were reported to have had 5,000 cavalry and 20 guns in this engagement, and to have left 80 dead on the field. The Japanese casualties were 30 killed and 185 wounded. On June 22nd this attack was followed up by another on a Russian force, 3,000 strong, occupying the highlands north-west of Nan-cheng on the Kai-yuan—Kirin Mandarin road. The Russians were driven northward in disorder, leaving over 50 dead, the Japanese casualties being only 2 killed and 17 wounded.

From this point the situation in Manchuria begins to lose interest for all except military students. The record for July is one of minor skirmishes only, the influence of the impending Peace Conference making itself felt on both sides until, from the end of the first week in August, conditions closely resembling an armistice prevailed. Both sides were, however, quite prepared to resume fighting on a large scale should the negotiations fall through. On July 25th, General Liniévitch telegraphed to the Tsar protesting against recent statements as to the unfavourable position of his armies,

and averring that the bearing of the Russian troops inspired him with complete confidence. A fortnight later a correspondent wrote from General Nogi's headquarters that, the end of the rainy season being now imminent, the Japanese were impatiently awaiting orders for a forward move: "Here at the front there is no faith in the conclusion of peace, and, if it is arranged, it will cause deep disappointment throughout the Japanese Army. All the young officers are literally spoiling for battle, while the seniors generally consider that the military progress has not yet been sufficient to justify the expectation that Russia will concede the terms that are of necessity required by Japan."



ON THE LOOK-OUT WITH LINIÉVITCH'S ARMY.

Here we may fitly close our review of the last phase of the land fighting in

Manchuria. The end is at hand, and, when we can take another glance at the opposing forces of Oyama and Liniévitch, the conditions will have altered as completely as the pantomime alters at the waving of the fairy's wand. Not without a touch of professional regret does the writer leave his narrative at this stage, but he would be a barbarous critic indeed if he allowed the undue predominance of such a sentiment to weaken the humane satisfaction inspired by the prospect of a peaceful ending to all these months of bitter and costly fighting. Liao-yang, the Sha-ho, Hei-kou-tai, and Mukden constituted a quartette of battles to which Harbin might have provided a glorious *finale*. But seldom, if ever, has the world been really better or wiser for the bringing to a logical conclusion of war between two civilised peoples ; and those who know most of war know best that pushing it to extremities has sometimes appalling and unmanageable results



Photo: Copyright, 1905, H. C. White Co., London.

BUDDHIST PRIESTS AND FUNERAL PROCESSION AT HIROSHIMA, JAPAN.

CHAPTER C.

THE GENERAL OUTLOOK — RUSSIA INTERNALLY — THE REFORM MOVEMENT — REVOLUTIONARY OUTBREAKS—THE BLACK SEA MUTINY—NAVAL AND MILITARY CHANGES —JAPAN AT HOME—CONCORD AND PREPAREDNESS—RUSSIAN WARSHIPS RAISED BY THE JAPANESE AT PORT ARTHUR.

IN the three preceding chapters the narrative of the actual fighting by sea and land has been brought up to a point almost in touch with the conclusion of peace. The negotiations leading up to the latter event will shortly be detailed, but, before proceeding to this final stage, it is essential to touch on some matters not directly connected with either the operations at the front or the proceedings at Portsmouth, but germane to both, and closely bound up with the scheme of this history. Throughout the latter the writer has endeavoured to keep the reader in mind of the progress of affairs at home in the case of both combatants. For this has been pre-eminently a war having many and immensely significant accompaniments, apart from the clash of armies on the battlefield, or the collision of squadrons on the high seas. To this proposition, of course, additional weight is lent when we arrive on the threshold of a great Peace Conference such as that foreshadowed in Chapter XCVII. For, in the modern great war between two civilised countries, it is becoming increasingly necessary to regard the continuance of hostilities from other standpoints than the mere capacity of either belligerent to go on fighting. More especially is this bound to be the case with two nations situated as were Russia and Japan. Here, on the one hand, we had an unquestioned world Power still of immense resources and influence, but internally in a violent state of transition. On the other, was a united people which had constitutionally "arrived," but whose companionship with the older Great Powers was too recent to allow it to risk with confidence the undue prolongation of a conflict internationally so detrimental and disturbing.

Taking Russia first as being the more seriously affected by these potent, if unwarlike, considerations, we must begin by picking up that thread of our narrative which was dropped at the close of Chapter LXXXVI. But it is only with a running pen, and in the barest outline, that it will be possible to deal with Russian domestic affairs during the closely packed period from the end of March to the conclusion of peace. For, unfortunately, the unrest, although in its origin it was more or less the outcome of the war, did not by any means synchronise with it. Peace brought but little immediate relief to those crushed beneath the combined pressure of absolutism and bureaucracy; it did not check the inquisitions of the police or cause the Cossack to use his whip less freely; it did not prevent the outbreak of a racial disturbance even more angry and horrifying in their tragic results than those which had so grimly punctuated the progress of the war. On the other hand, the termination of hostilities afforded some hope

that the political reform of Russia would eventually prove, as the writer has all along predicted, one of the most vital consequences of the struggle in the Far East.

It may seem difficult to reconcile the two last statements. But the fact is that what took place in Russia during the last six or eight months of the war can be roughly divided up under two heads, one being the Reform Movement proper, the other a rather indefinite, though none the less violent, revolutionary agitation proceeding from two or three different causes, but fanned by the same breezes of general discontent and Socialist encouragement.

Historically, the result is rather bewildering. On one side, we have Zemstvos, or Elective Municipal Councils, meeting in Moscow and discussing with apparent freedom even proposals assured to have received in a measure the Imperial approval. On the other, we see women and children brutally beaten in the course of street riots in Poland; domiciliary visits paid in fashionable quarters of the capital, and resulting in the discovery of apparatus for making bombs; and in the Caucasus a simple reign of terror. From such a queer mixture of constitutional effort and red revolution it is almost impossible to evolve any succinct and coherent story. But much confusion will be avoided by those who seek to dip deeper into the crowded happenings of this period if they keep in mind the distinction here roughly made, and avoid the error of supposing either that the calmer seekers after political freedom countenanced the revolutionary excesses of the Provinces, or that the worst of the revolutionary outbreaks were founded upon a passionate yearning for Constitutional Government.

As regards the Reform Movement, it is only necessary for the purposes of this work to establish one or two landmarks. The first of these was the Tsar's concession at the Russian Easter of a great measure of religious liberty affecting practically all classes of belief in Russia with the exception of the Jews. Hitherto, what were known as the "Old Believers," seceders from the Orthodox Church, Roman Catholics, Mahommedans, and various other religious communities laboured under serious disabilities as regards public worship, education, marriage, and legal processes. At one stroke these disabilities were abolished, and there is no question that this step, taken within a few weeks of the Battle of Mukden, served to alleviate much of the bitterness caused in Russia by that tremendous reverse. Indeed, according to one well-informed observer, it was "universally regarded as the greatest concession of individual liberty ever made in Russia since the liberation of the serfs," especial stress being laid upon the fact that the measure removed almost the last vestige of religious authority from the police.

But, while the detested powers of the Russian "guardians of law and order" were thus usefully curtailed, they were soon to be expanded in another direction by no means favourable to political freedom. For little more than a month later a most reactionary ukase was issued, virtually re-establishing the hated "Third Section," and placing the lives and liberties of the whole of Russia at the mercy of an official called the Assistant Minister of the Interior. Additional significance was lent to this pronouncement by the nomination of the notorious General Trepoff to be Assistant Minister of the Interior and Chief of the Corps of

THE LEADERS OF THE ZEMSTVOS WHO MET THE CZAR [illegible]

Gendarmerie, while retaining his post as Governor-General of St. Petersburg.

The above ukase was promulgated on June 5th. A fortnight later the Tsar received a deputation from the Zemstvos and municipalities headed by Professor Prince Sergius Troubetskoi, of Moscow University, who had created a considerable sensation six months previously by addressing a very outspoken letter to the Minister of the Interior, of which we have already made mention. The Tsar, who was attired in a white fatigue dress, looked pale and stern, and rather embarrassed in the presence of such an unwonted assembly, many members of which wore no uniform.

The following is said to be the gist of the speeches delivered on this momentous occasion. Prince Troubetskoi, speaking with easy, though respectful eloquence, tinged with emotion, which had the effect of relaxing the sternness of the Tsar's features, said substantially :—

"Sire,—We come to you to-day as loyal subjects desirous of speaking frankly and fearlessly to our sovereign. We come entrusted by our fellow-countrymen to lay before you imperative reasons for setting aside the old order of things which you yourself have condemned. The arbitrary police government created by the bureaucracy has brought the country to ruin, to a disastrous war, to anarchy, and to civil strife. We believe your promises to be sincere, but, alas! their fulfilment is entrusted to persons who are determined to defeat them, and sworn to mislead you and to make you suspicious of your subjects. These persons represent us as nothing better than Anarchists, yet we are sincerely and earnestly desirous of strengthening and promoting the best interests of your Throne which are indissoluble from the interests of our country. Cease to give heed to their intrigues; summon the people's elect; listen to them; therein lies our only hope of escape from civil war and a shameful peace. You alone can unite Russia again."

After a few minutes' solemn silence the Tsar in a firm, unhesitating voice replied :—

"I am happy to have heard you. I do not doubt, gentlemen, that you were guided by an ardent sentiment of love of your Fatherland in addressing yourselves directly to me. I have been and am still grieved in all my soul with you and all my people at the calamities which the war has brought upon Russia and at all those which may still be feared, as well as at our internal disturbances. Dissipate your doubts. My will is the sovereign and unalterable will, and the admission of elected representatives to the works of the State will be regularly accomplished. I watch every day and devote myself to this work. You may announce that to all your friends dwelling in the country as well as in towns.

"I am firmly convinced that Russia will emerge strengthened from the trials she is undergoing, and that there will be established soon as formerly a union between the Tsar and all Russia, a communion between myself and the men of the Russian soil. This union and communion, which must serve as a basis for the order of things, stand for the original principles of Russia. I have faith in your sincere desire to help me in the task."

It is sufficient for the purposes of this story to add that, after the lapse of another two months—that is, on August 19th—the Tsar issued a Manifesto granting to Russia a Constitution, somewhat elementary, it is true, and restricted by

a clear assertion of "the fundamental law regarding autocratic power," but still a Constitution distinctly including a Russian National Assembly. To the latter was given the name of *Gosoudarstvennaia Duma*, or State Council, and it was described in the Manifesto as "a special consultative body entrusted with the preliminary elaboration and discussion of measures, and with the examination of the State Budget." At the conclusion of the war, measures were in active progress for the formation of this body and its assembly not later than the middle of January, 1906.

Of the various revolutionary and kindred outbreaks which occurred in European and Asiatic Russia between March and September, 1905, no connected account can be given. But passing mention must be made of the terrible bloodshed in Poland on May Day, arising from a sudden collision between the populace of Warsaw and the troops with which the town had been packed in anticipation of a disturbance. Conflicting accounts were given of the origin of the outbreak, but there can be little doubt that disgraceful impatience and brutality were exhibited by the troops, with the result that a single day's casualties amounted to over 60 killed and some 200 wounded. A few days later there was a shocking massacre of Jews at Jitomir, the culprits in this case being not the troops but the populace. On May 24th the Governor of Baku was killed by a bomb. During June there was a fearful Mussulman outbreak in Trans-Caucasia, and in the last week of that month the rioting in Poland defied all the efforts of the Government to deal with it. In July there were most serious strikes at St. Petersburg and Cronstadt, the Prefect of Moscow was murdered, and riots at Nijni-Novgorod caused the killing and wounding of 65 persons and ruined the prospects of the famous annual Fair. The disturbances continued throughout August, and, as noted above, were in active progress, more especially in Trans-Caucasia, long after fighting at the front had come to a standstill.

At the end of June and in the early part of July there occurred an episode which must be considered apart from the main series of revolutionary outrages, although to some extent connected with it. The town of Odessa had for some time past been in a very excited state, when, on the afternoon of June 28th, there arrived in the harbour a battleship of the Black Sea Fleet, the *Kniaz Potemkin*, on which, as it presently transpired, there had been terrible happenings. Arising, it is said, out of the action of an officer in shooting a man who had complained of his food, the sailors had mutinied, had killed their captain and several of the officers, imprisoned others, and taken over control of the ship, which had left Sevastopol a few days previously for firing practice. Arriving at Odessa, the mutineers sent ashore for burial the body of their dead comrade, with a paper pinned on his breast stating that he had been killed merely because he had made a well justified complaint.

The excited mob in Odessa were greatly inflamed by this, and at once made common cause with the mutineers. The latter fired upon the troops, and the riotous populace set fire to the buildings and shipping. An immense amount of damage was done, and in the collisions between the rioters and the military hundreds were killed. On the news becoming known in St. Petersburg, a "state of war" in Odessa and the district was declared, and orders were

despatched to Vice-Admiral Krieger, at Sevastopol, to proceed at once to Odessa with a squadron of the Black Sea Fleet, consisting of four battleships and five torpedo-boats, with a view to bringing the mutineers to book.

Admiral Krieger's squadron came in sight of Odessa on the morning of June 30th. The *Kniaz Potemkin* at once cleared for action and steamed boldly out to meet the newcomers, which thereupon surrounded her. Signals were exchanged between the mutineers and the flagship, the Admiral calling upon the former to surrender to the Emperor, and being met by the rejoinder that the crew of the *Kniaz Potemkin* knew no Emperor. The mutineers now proceeded to cut the cordon surrounding them, and returned unmolested to their anchorage at Odessa! They were followed by another battleship, the *Georgei Pobiedonosets*, the crew of which had decided to throw in their lot with the *Kniaz Potemkin*. In this case, however, the mutineers lost heart, and subsequently surrendered.


ADMIRAL KRIEGER

The rest of this astonishing episode partakes of the nature of comic opera. Having failed to overawe the *Kniaz Potemkin*, Admiral Krieger took no further steps, but calmly returned to Sevastopol, where a council of admirals and captains was held, and it was decided to put the machinery of the warships out of gear, and send the crews ashore, evidently in view of the prevailing spirit of insubordination.

Meanwhile the *Kniaz Potemkin*, after a brief stay at Odessa, steamed down the Roumanian coast, and called at Constanza, where it demanded to be supplied with provisions. Meeting with a very chilling reception from the Roumanian authorities, the mutineers made a move to Theodosia in the Crimea, having in the meantime issued a "proclamation to the Powers," and various appeals to other Russian sailors and soldiers to join them. By this time the Russian Government was thoroughly aroused, and Admiral Krieger was ordered to assemble fresh crews, and if necessary send the *Kniaz Potemkin* to the bottom. Finding Theodosia too hot to hold them, the mutineers took their ship back to Constanza, and there, on July 9th, surrendered to the Roumanian authorities. Before leaving the *Kniaz Potemkin* they opened the sea-cocks, with the result that the ship's keel rested on the bottom, and extensive pumping was necessary before she could be moved and taken back to Sevastopol. The mutineers also divided up between them a large sum of money which was found in the ship's treasure chest. They surrendered on the condition that they should not be handed over to the Russian authorities, and the

majority appear to have escaped punishment, including the leader of the mutiny, a man named Matushenko, who is stated to have killed ten officers with his own hand.

Thus ended the Black Sea Mutiny, and there is little doubt that Russia had reason to congratulate herself on such a comparatively tame ending to what might have proved a catastrophe second only in magnitude to the Battle of the Sea of Japan. According to some of the mutineers from the *Kniaz Potemkin* who found their way to Budapest, a general occurred prematurely on the *Kniaz Potemkin* with the results described. Be this as it may, there is no question as to the signs of disaffection among the sailors generally at Sevastopol, and similar evidence was forthcoming in the case of other naval centres, notably Kronstadt, where early in July one cruiser refused to go to sea with the training squadron, and had to be disarmed and moored in the roadstead.

Much of this spirit of insubordination among the Russian sailors is ascribed by a *Times* correspondent to want of



SOME OF THE CREW OF THE REBEL BATTLESHIP *KNIAZ POTEMKIN*.
The lieutenant in the centre of the group was one of the officers killed by the mutineers.

mutiny of all the crews of the Black Sea Squadron had been planned, and the scheme only failed in consequence of a misunderstanding as to the date of the outbreak. The latter had been fixed for the beginning of August, but trouble had proper control by the officers, who themselves were in a very discontented state. The following extremely interesting extract puts the case very clearly :—

"Dissatisfaction has been growing for many years since the introduction of the

system whereby promotion is possible only for the favoured few who manage to secure almost continuous service afloat. As the Baltic and Black Sea Fleets are in commission only three months out of the twelve, and their foreign cruises are necessarily limited, it is almost impossible for an officer without strong interests and friends in high quarters to rise in his profession. Thirty per cent. of the graduates of the naval college have regularly resigned their commissions within a few years after entering the service. The result has been that there are so few officers that a midshipman is often left in charge of 350 bluejackets at the depôt. An officer who had had this experience told me he felt as if he was coming into a cage of wild animals. The situation is almost as bad afloat. Ninety-nine per cent. are young sailors, who become sea-sick, cry aloud to the saints to save them, and curse the day when they were misled into joining the navy. The fact is, said my informant, the Russian peasant naturally hates the sea, and the bureaucratic Admiralty has done nothing to help or encourage officers to overcome this hatred.

"These are some of the causes which underlie the tragedy of the Russian Navy. It is easy to realise that among discontented, idle seamen bereft of the proper control of their officers the revolutionary propaganda found a ready soil."

One very significant result of this mutiny must not be overlooked. It goes without saying that events in the Far East had not assisted Russia's influence at Constantinople, and a further decline of her prestige was naturally caused by the state of inefficiency and unmanageableness revealed in her Black Sea Fleet. Nor was this all. For some time past Turkey had been anxious to strengthen the fortifications at the mouth of the Bosphorus, but had been afraid of hurting Russian susceptibilities. The performances of *Kniaz Potemkin* afforded an excellent excuse for making the desired improvements, and in the first week in July a number of heavy guns were mounted, and other preparations made ostensibly with a view to repelling the errant battleship. The work was continued, in spite of Russian protests, for some time after the termination of the *Potemkin* incident, a striking instance of Russia's present incapacity to assert herself in the Near East with anything like the vigour she had displayed a couple of years back in imposing her will upon the Sublime Porte.

It is stated on good authority that the Tsar was more profoundly impressed by the *Potemkin* mutiny than he had been even by the Battle of the Sea of Japan, and he certainly displayed considerable promptitude and vigour in initiating a new naval policy. On July 12th it was announced that Admiral Birileff instead of proceeding to Vladivostok would take over the duties of Minister of Marine in succession to Admiral Avellan, who had resigned after the destruction of the Baltic Fleet. This appointment, which was in itself a departure from traditional usage, since Admiral Birileff had not served the usual probationary period as Administrator of the Marine Department, was accompanied by an Imperial Rescript addressed to the new Minister. In this both the Battle of the Sea of Japan and the more recent mutiny in the Black Sea received allusion, and Admiral Birileff was enjoined to take special measures for the renewal of a spirit of discipline as well as for the improvement of all-round efficiency. As to the future programme of naval construction, the Ministry of

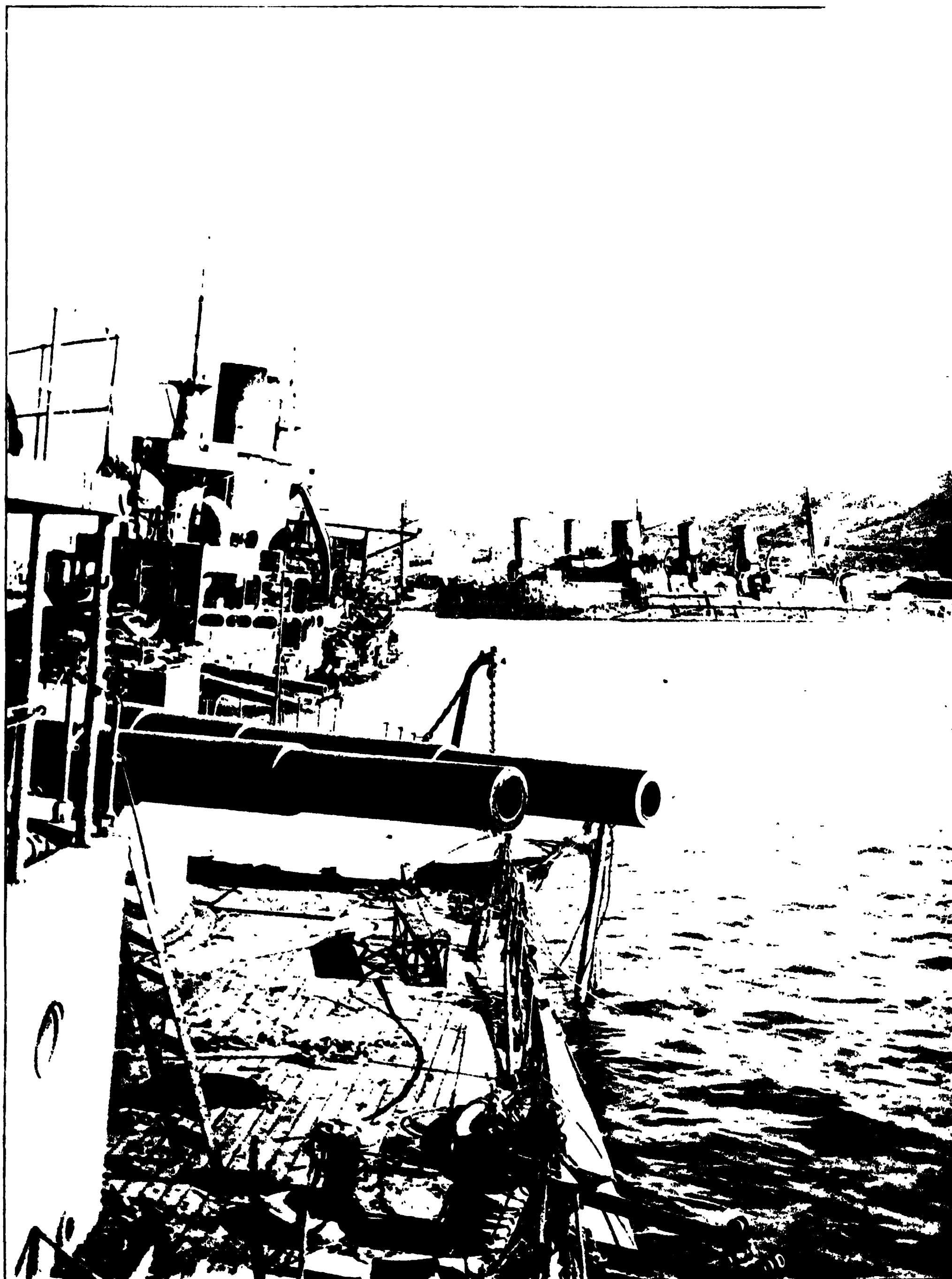
Marine must at once commence to take measures to assure the maritime defence of the Russian coast and all Russian waters, and then gradually reconstitute the fighting squadrons according to the resources available. Altogether a remarkable pronouncement strongly suggestive of that power of recuperation which has historically been one of Russia's most valuable national assets.

This inauguration of a new naval policy, by the way, had followed closely on the heels of important changes at the Russian War Office. Here General Sakharoff, Minister of War, had on July 2nd been succeeded by the chief Secretary, General Ridiger. General Sakharoff's resignation was attended by the publication of a sort of *apologia* in the shape of a statement showing the numbers of troops which had been despatched to the Far East during recent stages of the war, and the various measures taken to insure the fighting efficiency of the troops at the front. This publication of information likely to be of value to the enemy was hotly criticised, and certainly does not go far to improve General Sakharoff's reputation as a War Minister. It is said that the immediate cause of this official's resignation was the fact that he had found himself virtually subordinated to a new Committee of National Defence, which had just been created in flattering imitation of the example of Great Britain.

Having now surveyed Russia at home in four different, all of them highly significant aspects, political, revolutionary, naval, and military, we may now turn to Japan and examine her domestic condition also in relation to the possibility of peace. Here the popular historian's task is much lighter. It may be that future research will reveal the fact that during the first six or eight months of 1905 the home progress of the Japanese nation presented several interesting features from both the social and administrative standpoints. Indeed, to the European outsider it would seem, from the tone of the Japanese Press, that during this period the public, at any rate, of Tokio was rapidly tending towards a freedom of thought and vigour of expression distinctly in advance of anything observed during the earlier stages of the war. But we are not here concerned with such developments, deeply interesting as they are. More to the purpose of this chapter is the fact that, generally speaking, while Russia at home was being plagued by revolutionary agitation, mutiny, and divided naval and military counsels, Japan was pursuing an even tenor of way closely resembling the smooth progress of her armies on land and her fleets at sea.

In a variety of ways was this harmony of movement indicated. About the beginning of March the Japanese Diet was prorogued, and the Parliamentary leaders, Count Okuma and the Marquis Saionji, in taking farewell of their respective parties, exhibited a remarkable agreement in their views as to the continuance of the war, and the imperative necessity of bearing cheerfully the added burdens and responsibilities which that would entail. Japanese party politics are by no means of a tame variety, and only a very high sense of patriotism, and an impressive appreciation of the value of unanimity in such circumstances, could have produced such happily concordant utterances.

For the rest, Japan, to outward seeming, bore the stress of war with extraordinary composure. The public, however much it may have felt the strain of taxation coupled with the sad incidence



From Stereograph: Copyright, 1905, by Underwood & Underwood, London & New York.

"SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI."

Photograph taken, after the fall of Port Arthur, of Russia's derelict warships, showing in succession the "Poltava" (foreground), the "Retvisan," and "Pallada" and "Pobeda" (in distance).

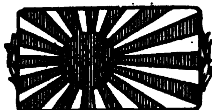
of constant bereavement—to say nothing of the privations endured in the absence of family supporters at the front—remained tranquil and exhibited feeling only in the direction of enthusiastic celebrations of successive victories.

Nor were Japan's relations with the outside non-belligerent world less happy. Her few well-placed loans were accorded a most gratifying response, and her credit, always high, reached during the period in question a pinnacle to which some older and richer nations have not often attained. A most favourable impression, too, was created in the Western world by the tour of Prince and Princess Arisugawa of Japan, who, at the end of June, attended, as the representatives of the Mikado, the marriage of the German Crown Prince, and later paid an extremely interesting visit to this country. Another incident pleasantly confirming the satisfactory relations of Japan with foreign countries was the reception accorded in Tokio to the United States Secretary for War, Mr. Taft, who made a short stay in the Japanese capital at the end of July, his party including a non-official, but conspicuously important, member in Miss Alice Roosevelt, the attractive and popular daughter of the peace-making President.

Of the continued harmonious co-operation of the Japanese naval and military authorities at home it is almost unnecessary to speak. But a few words may be given to a remarkable measure taken in April, 1905, by which the Government of Japan expanded the numerical capacity of her active Army. We have already seen how the period of service in the Reserves was increased as a provision against war wastage. This was followed in the spring of 1905 by a fresh Imperial Ordinance declaring that the Territorial Army itself, and certain other details, should be eligible to fill vacancies in the ranks of the field force. It is difficult to estimate the increase thus available, but, according to an expert, it was not less than a quarter of a million men.

There is nothing that need be added here to what has been said in previous chapters as to the tightening of Japan's grip of Korea. But a passing allusion may be made to the partial refloating of the cruiser *Varyag*, formerly a conspicuous ornament of the Russian Navy, which was sunk in Chemulpo Harbour as the result of the naval engagement of February 9th, 1904.

From this subject we may now appropriately turn to other additions made in 1905 to the Fleet of Japan in the shape of the salved warships, formerly Russian, at Port Arthur. Before the conclusion of peace the Japanese had not only raised, but sent to Japan under their own steam, the two battleships *Peresviet* and *Poltava;* and the battleships *Retvisan* and *Pobieda*, the armoured cruiser *Bayan*, and the protected cruiser *Pallada* had been refloated, and were rapidly being made fit for service under the flag of the Rising Sun.



CHAPTER CI.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE—MEETING OF TSAR AND KAISER—RECEPTION OF ENVOYS BY PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT—NEGOTIATIONS OPENED—JAPAN'S DEMANDS—RUSSIA FIRM—SUDDEN DEVELOPMENT—AGREEMENT REACHED—THE ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE—PEACE.

AT the close of Chapter XCVII. it was mentioned that it had been arranged that the Peace Conference should take place at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in August. On the 9th of that month the Conference duly held its first session, but, in the interval between the departure of the Russian and Japanese delegates from their respective countries and their meeting in the shadow of the American flag, certain events occurred worthy of record as being indirectly, if not directly, connected with the eventual result.

Among these must be classed a singular confabulation between the Tsar and the German Emperor on July 23rd. On the morning of that day the Tsar left Peterhof on board the Imperial yacht *Pole Star* for Borgo, in the Gulf of Finland. That evening the Emperor William's yacht, the *Hohenzollern*, dropped anchor near the *Pole Star;* the Emperor was rowed to the latter, and, after the usual ceremonies, had a short conversation with the Tsar in the deck saloon of the *Pole Star*. The Tsar then accompanied the Kaiser to the *Hohenzollern*, and remained with him from 11 p.m. to 1.30 a.m. Such, briefly and baldly, is the record of an interview which created extraordinary interest throughout the civilised world, and the "true inwardness" of which has never been, and probably never will be, revealed. In spite of the obscurity which surrounds the incident, it can hardly be entirely disregarded by any annalist of the war, and it may well be that contemporary speculation, which linked the imperial meeting very closely indeed with the question of the peace negotiations, was fully justified. In any case, it would be impossible of belief that, at the conversation held between these two great potentates at midnight in circumstances of such studied privacy, the possibility of bringing the Peace Conference to a successful issue was not closely, perhaps warmly, discussed. The matter in all its bearings can only be treated, even conjecturally, at great length, and, as it is not essential to our present purpose, may now be set aside, and less mysterious accompaniments of the situation dealt with.

What may be termed the prelude to the opening of the Conference was not particularly reassuring. The Japanese delegation, on arrival in America, behaved with marked circumspection, Baron Komura refused to grant any interviews with reference to the coming negotiations, and contented himself with statements and observations characterised by extreme tact and clear appreciation of the responsibilities involved. M. Witte, on the contrary, was rather garrulous, and his freedom of speech was accentuated by the attitude of his fellow-countrymen generally with regard to the Conference.

At the beginning of August the Russian demeanour had become so extremely irritating that the Tokio papers blazed into righteous indignation. Japan herself, they declared, had carefully refrained throughout the war from anything like vainglory, and was now approaching the Conference in a spirit of courtesy and moderation, notwithstanding the fact that her unbroken succession of victories on land and sea had conferred on her the right to speak in the tone of a conqueror, and to impose terms of peace. It was intolerable that Russia should arrogate that right, behaving as if she, and she alone, were entitled to dictate terms, "having only consented to open negotiations as an act of benevolent leniency towards Japan."

This initial misunderstanding might have proved more serious but for the fact that by this time the Russian as well as the Japanese envoys were in America, and formal calls were being made by the plenipotentiaries upon President Roosevelt at Oyster Bay. The latter proceeding was made the occasion of an interesting ceremony. Two United States cruisers were detailed for the purpose of bringing the envoys from New York to the place of reception, the *Tacoma* carrying Baron Komura and Mr. Takahira, and the *Chattanooga* accommodating M. Witte and Baron Rosen. The two vessels flew the Japanese and Russian flags at their respective foremasts, and in each case ambassadorial salutes of 19 guns were fired.

The President received his guests on board the U.S. Naval Yacht *Mayflower*. The surroundings were of considerable beauty, the bay, with its green and undulating shores, being studded with ships and yachts dressed with bunting; while the President's flag, all gold, and azure, and scarlet, floated from the *Mayflower's* peak. The Japanese were the first to arrive, the President waiting for them in the cabin. "Ceremony," writes the *Times* correspondent, "at that point there was none. The President and the envoys were, as he said heartily, old friends. Baron Komura had been his classmate at Harvard University, and Mr. Takahira has been Japanese Minister at Washington ever since Mr. Roosevelt became President. Five minutes passed in private talk. When the Russians arrived, they, too, were greeted as friends. Both knew, of course, that they were to meet, but the President brought them together quite suddenly. While the Russians were with him in the saloon he opened the door of the next cabin, called in the Japanese, and forthwith introduced them. They shook hands as, at least for the moment, friends.

"A dramatic situation, which the President cut short, saying, 'Now let us have lunch,' and led the way, the rest following. All questions of precedence were waived; the envoys were grouped about the President, the others sitting or standing where they could."

At the end of lunch the President rose and said:—

"Gentlemen,—I propose a toast to which there will be no answer, which I have the honour to ask you to drink in silence, standing. I drink to the welfare and prosperity of the Sovereigns and peoples of the two great nations whose representatives have met one another in this ship. It is my most earnest hope and prayer, in the interest not only of those two great Powers, but of all civilised mankind, that a just and lasting peace may speedily be concluded between them."

The reception at Oyster Bay took

place on August 6th, and on the 8th the plenipotentiaries with their suites assembled at Portsmouth, where the Naval Stores building had been made ready for the Conference. Another short newspaper extract gives us not only a good idea of the scene at the Portsmouth landing-place on this eventful morning, but also some additional details respecting the *entourage* of each of the peace representatives :—

"Amid an Ambassadorial salute of 19 guns, came an admiral's launch bringing the Russian envoys. M. Witte stepped ashore first, towering above all, yet bowed with the heavy responsibility of seeking to regain in the council chamber what has been lost on the battlefield. He was followed by Baron Rosen, whose misconception of the real strength of the Japanese spirit was so curiously combined with sympathy and good feeling for the Japanese people. In the suite attracted much attention M. de Martens, the great jurist and mouthpiece of M. Witte, M. Plançon, Foreign Secretary to the Viceroy Alexeieff, who, when Chargé d'Affaires at Peking, made those famous demands on China in the spring of 1903 regarding Manchuria which were so vehemently denied as fabrications and so immediately admitted as true, and his predecessor in the office of Foreign Secretary at Port Arthur, M. Korostovetz, who, in November, 1900, signed at Port Arthur, on behalf of Admiral Alexeieff, the first Manchurian agreement with Chou-mien, representative of the Mukden Viceroy, Tseng-chi. From the Russians the figure of M. Pokotiloff, Russian Minister at Peking, was missing. He has not yet arrived, but will be in time to give the advantage of his immense knowledge of recent Far Eastern history to the Conference.

"Again an Ambassadorial salute announced the arrival of the Japanese Plenipotentiaries. Baron Komura looked well, and bore himself with much dignity. Accompanying him was his distinguished suite, conspicuous among them being Mr. Denison, the American trusted adviser of the Japanese Foreign Office, whose services to his adopted country have been so generously recognised by every Japanese; and Colonel Tachibano, who, in his capacity of translator of military literature, has been for years attached to Viceroy Yuan Shih-kai's army headquarters at Pao-ting-fu. The envoys and their suites assembled in the Peace Conference building, and were afterwards formally received by Mr. McLane, the Governor of New Hampshire."

The Conference, as noted in the opening paragraph of this chapter, held its first meeting on August 9th, and certain formalities were duly disposed of. The language question was settled by an agreement that each envoy might speak in any tongue he liked, the secretaries interpreting. But the protocols, and the treaty also, if made, were to be drawn up in both French and English. Later, the question of credentials was settled. In this connection it may be remarked that Baron Komura insisted that only plenipotentiaries and their secretaries should actually be present at the Conference, thereby excluding M. de Martens.

On August 10th the Japanese laid on the table in writing their terms of peace. M. Witte took them and announced that he would carefully consider them, and reply in writing as soon as possible. The Conference therefore adjourned, and did not again meet until the 12th, when the Russian reply was presented.

It subsequently transpired that Japan's terms were embodied in twelve Articles,

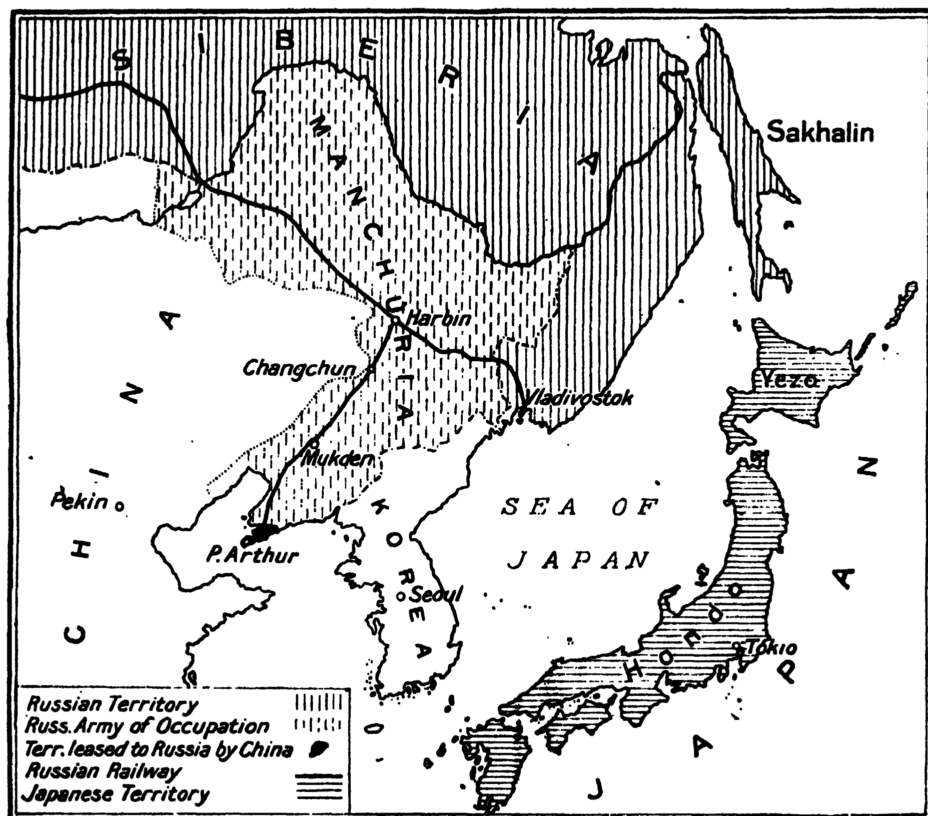


the demands being, substantially, as follows:—

I.—That Japan should, while maintaining intact the integrity and independence of Korea, enjoy a predominant position in that country.

V.—That the Island of Sakhalin should be ceded to Japan.

VI.—That the docks, quays, magazines, houses, and other works constructed by the Russian Government in Port Arthur and Dalny should be handed over to Japan without compensation.



TERRITORIES IN THE FAR EAST AT THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

II.—That Manchuria should be evacuated entirely by Russian as well as by Japanese troops.

III.—That the leases granted by China to Russia for the occupation of the Liaotung Peninsula, including Port Arthur, should be transferred to Japan.

IV.—That the administration of Manchuria should be retroceded to the Chinese authorities in accordance with the Convention of April 8th, 1902.

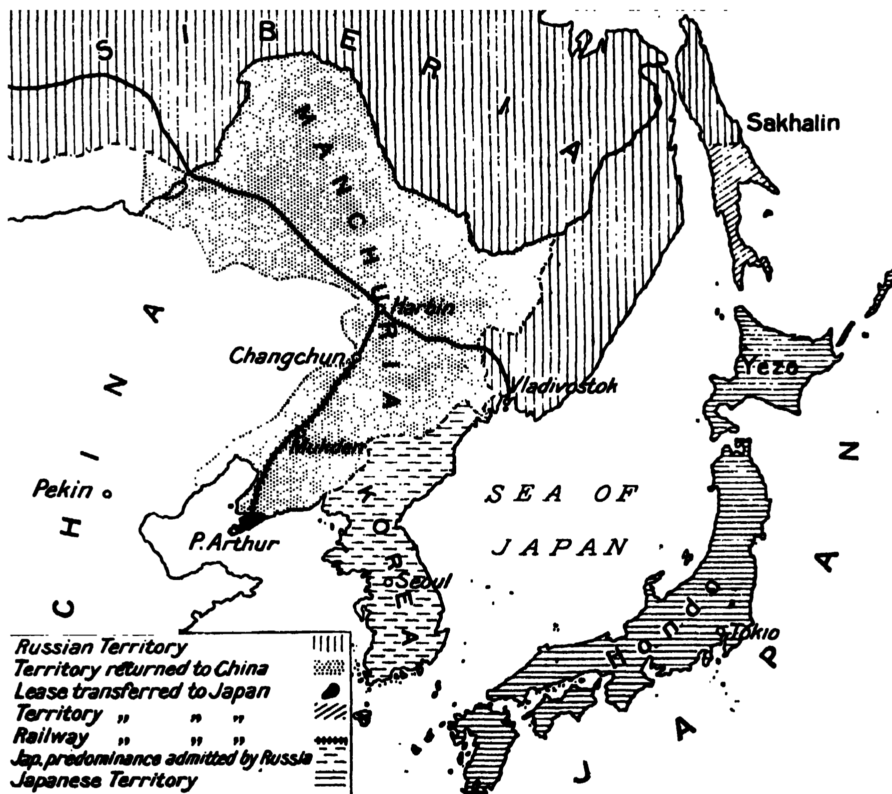
VII.—That the section of the Manchurian Railway connecting Harbin with Dalny and Port Arthur should be retroceded to China.

VIII.—The precise nature of the original demand comprised in this Article is not clearly apparent, but it is understood to have had reference to the railway from Harbin to Vladivostok, and,

more particularly, to the question of frontier guards.

IX.—That a war indemnity should be paid to Japan by Russia.

X.—That the Russians should hand over to Japan the warships which in the course of the war took refuge in foreign ports.



TERRITORIES IN THE FAR EAST AT THE CONCLUSION OF PEACE.

XI.—That definite restrictions should be placed on Russia's naval forces in the Far East.

XII.—That certain fishing rights on the Siberian coast should be granted to Japanese subjects.

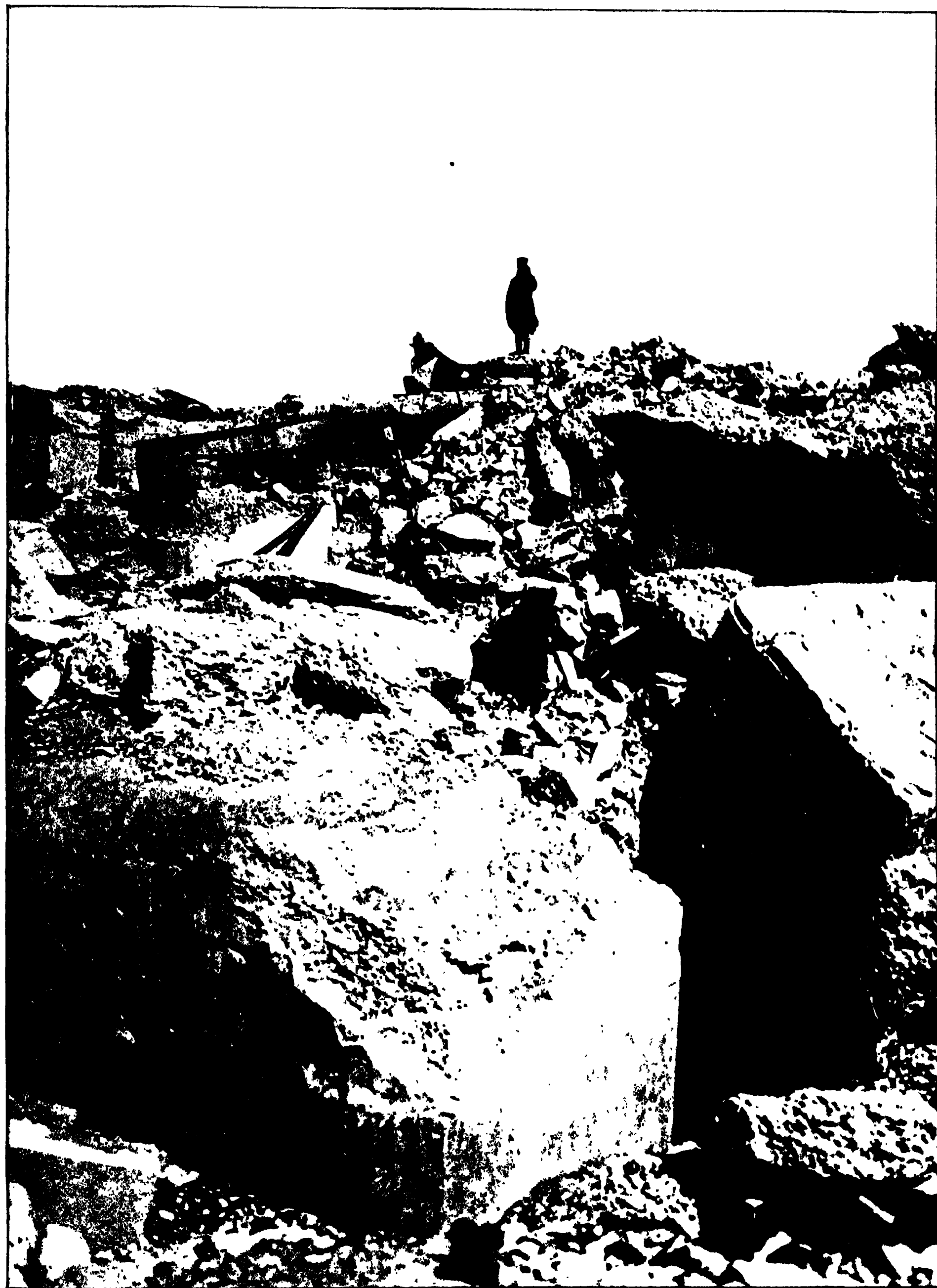
The practical outcome of the Russian reply as delivered on the 12th was the flat rejection of the demands for a war indemnity, for the cession of Sakhalin, for the transfer of the interned ships, and for the limitation of Russia's naval power in the Far East, the remaining demands being either virtually conceded or left open for discussion. A little later some sort of agreement was reached on all the points with the exception of those covered by Articles V., IX., and XI., and on these Russia stood firm, more particularly on the question of paying an indemnity and the cession of territory. At the beginning of the fourth week in August, after many references to both Tokio and St. Petersburg, the Japanese offered to sell Sakhalin, or part of Sakhalin, to Russia for a sum of, it is said,

150 millions sterling. The Russian Plenipotentiaries, recognising that this would be merely paying the indemnity in another form, declined to entertain the proposal, and for a few days matters were at a complete deadlock, and the abrupt termination of the Conference was freely predicted.

At this stage President Roosevelt intervened with a personal appeal to the Tsar to reconsider the question of the indemnity, but was met by an unqualified refusal. The Imperial reply was conveyed to the President through the American Ambassador at St. Petersburg on August 26th, and the 27th and 28th passed without any visible improvement of the situation. The detailed history of these few days is from some standpoints exceedingly interesting, even though it consists largely of rumours and surmises sometimes based on very trivial happenings. But no useful purpose would be served by entering closely here into these diplomatic *minutiæ*. It is sufficient to add to the foregoing bare outline of the negotiations the statement, that on August 29th the situation suddenly changed, and that a little after noon on that day an official bulletin was issued to the effect that the Conference had arrived at a complete accord on all questions, and that it had been decided to proceed to an elaboration of a treaty of peace!

The manner in which this tremendous result had been arrived at was highly dramatic. The Conference opened its session on the 29th at 9.30 a.m. After some preliminaries, M. Witte said that during the night he had received instructions reiterating the Tsar's previous command as to the non-payment of an indemnity. He then intimated that he was prepared to offer the cession of the southern part of Sakhalin Island. Baron Komura is reported to have replied: "I accept that"; and thus, in a few words, the great question which for weeks had agitated two hemispheres, and which had been almost universally regarded for some days as having arrived at a hopeless *impasse*, was finally and satisfactorily settled. The envoys solemnly shook hands over the arrangement, and it was agreed to meet again in the afternoon for the adjustment of details. Meanwhile, the representatives on both sides would use their best endeavours for the conclusion of an armistice.

It is needless to follow contemporary journalism by making a long story of the ovations received by the envoys on their return to their quarters after this momentous performance; but it is significant that while M. Witte had the greatest difficulty in controlling his joyful emotions, Baron Komura was found by a privileged visitor the same evening shedding bitter tears. There was, of course, no question that he had yielded solely at the command of his Imperial master, and that to him, as to the great majority of Japanese, the abandonment of such a serious proportion of the original demands was a terrible disappointment. M. Witte, on the other hand, was naturally overjoyed at the success of his mission, and for some weeks the Press of Europe and America was largely occupied with what purported to be his comments upon the splendid results he had achieved by his resolute and astute diplomacy. At first there was a disposition to accept M. Witte at his own valuation, but later it transpired that throughout the negotiations the Tsar had practically initiated and directed every Russian movement, and that M. Witte's work was chiefly restricted to acting as



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THE RUINS OF NIRIUSAN FORT, PORT ARTHUR, THE STRONGEST FORT IN THE SIEGE LINE IN THE NORTH.

This chaos was caused by the explosion of several tons of dynamite beneath the fort.

a mouthpiece, and endeavouring to create a favourable impression on the American public by insisting on Russia's magnanimity in conceding so much, and on the huckstering spirit displayed by Japan in haggling over the question of a money payment.

That the world in general had been to any appreciable extent misled by these characteristic flights of Russian diplomacy is not to be supposed. It was widely recognised—in Europe, at any rate—that a Power which had been put, as Japan had been, to such a heavy burden through the aggressive policy of another, had every right to expect to be recouped for her vast expenditure, as one of the natural accompaniments of a peace unsought by herself. It was not forgotten, moreover, not only that Germany made France pay an enormous sum in hard cash after the war of 1870, but that Russia also had exacted a heavy indemnity from Turkey after that of 1877. It is true that she had not been paid—at any rate, in full—but she had not failed to use the unsettled balance as an extremely powerful lever at certain important political junctures. Of course, in the present case she was clearly at liberty to refuse to pay an indemnity, and to go on fighting as the alternative. But to accuse her adversary of little-mindedness for seeking to do what both Germany and she had done to such excellent purpose within living memory was curiously typical of that cynical shamelessness which has so often marked Russian diplomacy in matters connected with the making—and breaking—of treaties.

Whether, in spite of all this, M. Witte's pose had impressed the people of the United States, and whether Japan, keenly sensitive to the least breath on her national honour, was partly impelled to forego the indemnity for fear lest she should be thought mercenary, is a very interesting question. But it is not one over which we can now afford to linger. More material to the real issue was the actual reception of the news that an agreement had been arrived at, and that, unless something quite unforeseen occurred, there would be no further renewal of the conflict which for nineteen months had kept the whole civilised world on tenterhooks. That the first feeling expressed should have been one of surprise was natural, since the end had undoubtedly come with some suddenness, and many intelligent and well-informed critics had, on the eve of the accord, been quite prepared for a final rupture and a fresh recourse to warlike arguments. But that the onlooking nations, with perhaps one exception, were not only rather taken aback by the unexpected peaceful issue, but genuinely delighted, was soon apparent.

The organs of a dozen different countries were crowded with congratulations to Russia, to Japan, to President Roosevelt, and to the world in general, and with these were mostly combined apt and hearty tributes to the country which, as the *Times* observed in an impressive leading article, had made a sacrifice, of which her loud-talking adversaries had shown themselves incapable, for the sake of peace: "She has renounced claims which are just, and which she knows to be just, in order to promote it, and the renunciation of these claims will saddle her people with a load of over £120,000,000. In this practical fashion, which all men can grasp and appreciate, she has amply fulfilled her proud boast that she would astonish the world by her moderation no less than by her victories."

To attempt to pass from the above general statement to a close reproduction of Continental sentiment would involve us in a tangled web of issues outside the scope of this work. But a passing mention must be made of the gratification of France at seeing her ally at last released from her Far Eastern entanglement—a gratification somewhat modified a little later by that ally's rather marked forgetfulness of certain important services rendered during the war, not the least being France's good offices in the matter of the North Sea outrage. For Germany, again, the conclusion of peace meant much, but her satisfaction at the renewal of trade relations with the Far East was to some extent discounted by political considerations, and the fear lest in the readjustment of the balance of power both in Asia and in Europe she might find herself in that dreaded condition of isolation in which she had done her best to keep at least one of her rivals in the past.

For in August and September, 1905, history was being made rapidly, and Germany, in common with Russia, had now to face another result of the war in the Far East besides the agreement come to between the Peace Plenipotentiaries at Portsmouth. On September 1st, only three days after the announcement that the war was virtually at an end, it was officially stated that a new Treaty of Alliance had been signed on August 12th between England and Japan. On September 27th the terms of this Treaty of Agreement were published, and it became evident that an instrument was now in force which would not only secure for at least a decade the due observance of the Treaty of Portsmouth, but would also be a powerful, if not irresistible, influence for the consolidation and maintenance of general peace in the regions of Eastern Asia and India.

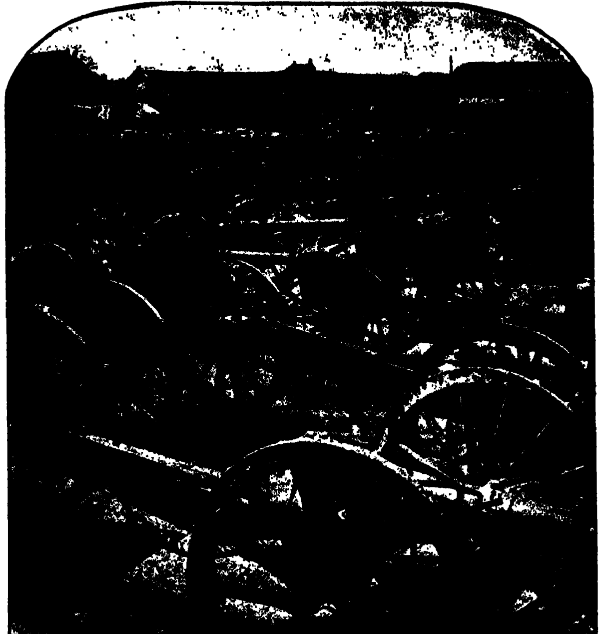


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THE SPOILS OF WAR.

Park of Russian field-guns captured by the Japanese at Ham-a-tan after fierce fighting.

We must not project ourselves outside the scheme of the present work by dwelling here upon the steps taken in this second but, chronologically speaking, earlier treaty to safeguard Japanese special interests in Korea and British special interests in "all that concerns the security of the Indian Frontier." But it will be transparently clear that the publication of this extended agreement between Japan and Great Britain on the very morrow of the conclusion of the

Russo-Japanese War put a very different complexion upon the future position of Russia's former adversary. Without some such extension of the former Anglo-Japanese Alliance, it was not inconceivable that the day might come when Japan could be safely attacked by sea, and in Korea, by a suitable European combination which, with luck, might succeed in doing what Russia alone failed so signally to accomplish. But the certainty that such an attempt in the next ten years would bring the Navy of Great Britain on the scene in a *rôle* of world-wide activity was a reflection calculated to give pause to the wildest of ambitions, and to check the most fantastic and unscrupulous of intrigues.

Yet another effect had the promulgation of the new Anglo-Japanese Treaty, and that in a very interesting and important direction. In Russia the news of the Portsmouth agreement was received with moderate enthusiasm, tempered by some unavoidable humiliation, and the recollection that internal affairs were still in a very disturbed and distressful state. In Japan, on the other hand, when it became generally known that Russia had not been compelled to pay an indemnity, and was to retain the northern portion of Sakhalin, the habitual reserve of the people broke down, and a storm of public indignation raged at Tokio and other centres. There were, indeed, some riots which at one time looked positively ugly, and there was no sort of question as to the depth of feeling involved. Gradually the first big waves of wrath subsided, and on the still troubled waters oil was poured by calculations as to the importance of the results actually secured by Japan, and by the reproduction of the terms of the new Alliance with England. It was felt that the latter made good what the Portsmouth Treaty had left a little uncertain, and the sound sense of the nation soon began to assert itself in

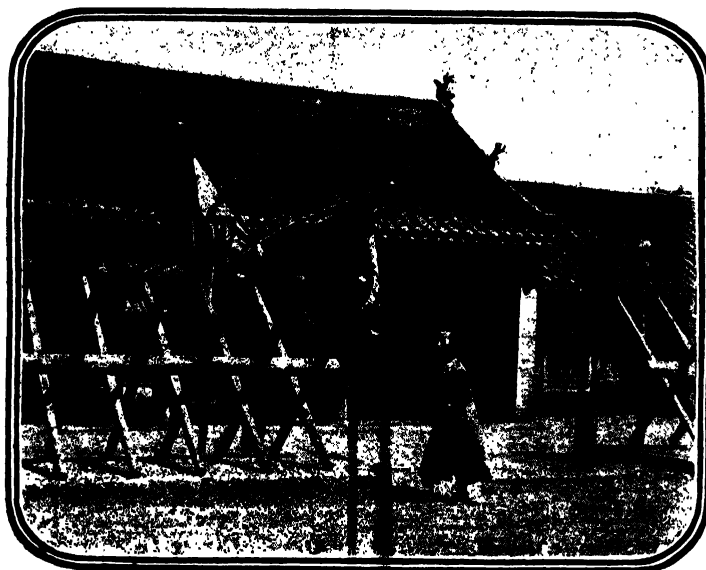


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EXTERIOR OF MARQUIS OYAMA'S HEADQUARTERS AT MUKDEN.

the direction of taking due commercial and industrial advantage of the improved condition of affairs, and of the vastly increased opportunities for Japanese enterprise at home and abroad.

We must now revert to the making of the Treaty of Peace, and to the immediate sequel as regards the forces in the field. The Treaty itself was signed by the Plenipotentiaries at Portsmouth at 3.47 on the afternoon of September 5th.

Later, a synopsis of the treaty was secured by Reuter's Agency. Of this synopsis the following is a reproduction. After a preamble reciting the circumstances in which the Plenipotentiaries were appointed, the treaty is outlined as under:—

Article I. stipulates for the re-establishment of peace and friendship between the Sovereigns of the two Empires and between the subjects of Russia and Japan respectively.



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TRANSPORTING BALED HAY. AT TIE LING.

Article II.—His Majesty the Emperor of Russia recognises the preponderant

interest, from political, military, and economic points of view, of Japan in the Empire of Korea, and stipulates that Russia will not oppose any measures for its government, protection, or control that Japan will deem necessary to take in Korea in conjunction with the Korean Government, but Russian subjects and Russian enterprises are to enjoy the same *status* as the subjects and enterprises of other countries.

Article III.—It is mutually agreed that the territory of Manchuria shall be simultaneously evacuated by both the Russian and Japanese troops, both countries being concerned in this evacuation and their situations being absolutely identical. All rights acquired by private persons and companies shall remain intact.

Article IV.—The rights possessed by Russia in conformity with the lease to Russia of Port Arthur and Dalny, together with the lands and waters adjacent, shall pass over entirely to Japan, but the properties and rights of Russian subjects are to be safeguarded and respected.

Article V.—The Russian and Japanese Governments engage themselves reciprocally not to put any obstacles in the way of the general measures, which shall be alike for all nations, that China may take for the development of the commerce and industry of Manchuria.

Article VI.—The Manchurian Railway shall be worked jointly between the Russians and the Japanese at Kwang-cheng-tsze. The respective portions of the line shall be employed only for commercial and industrial purposes. In view of Russia's keeping her line with all the rights acquired by her convention with China for the construction of the railway, Japan acquires the mines in connection with the section of the lines which falls to her. The rights of private parties or private enterprises, however, are to be respected. Both parties to this treaty remain absolutely free to undertake what they may deem fit on the expropriated ground.

Article VII.—The Russians and the Japanese engage to make a junction of the lines which they own at Kwang-cheng-tsze.

Article VIII.—It is agreed that the lines of the Manchurian Railway shall be worked with a view to ensuring commercial traffic between them without obstruction.

Article IX.—Russia cedes to Japan the southern part of Sakhalin Island as far north as the 50th degree of north latitude, together with the island depending thereon. The right of free navigation is assured in the bays of La Perouse and Tartary.

Article X. deals with the situation of Russian subjects in the southern part of Sakhalin, and stipulates that Russian colonists shall be free and have the right to remain without changing their nationality. Japan, on the other hand, shall have the right to force Russian convicts to leave the territory ceded to her.

Article XI.—Russia shall make an agreement with Japan giving the Japanese subjects the right to fish in Russian territorial waters in the Seas of Japan, Okhotsk, and Behring.

Article XII.—The two high contracting parties engage to renew the commercial treaty existing between the two Governments before the war in all its vigour, with slight modifications of detail and the most-favoured-nation clause.

Article XIII.—The Russians and Japanese reciprocally engage to exchange prisoners of war, paying the real cost of the keep of the same, such cost to be supported by documents.

Article XIV.—This treaty shall be drawn up in two languages, French and English, the French text being evidence for the Russians, and the English for the Japanese. In case of difficulty in interpretation the French document will be decisive.

Article XV.—The ratification of this treaty shall be signed by the Sovereigns of the two States within 50 days after the signature of the treaty. The French Legation and the American Embassy shall be the intermediaries between the Japanese and Russian Governments, and they will announce by telegraph the ratification of the treaty.

The following two additional articles were agreed to:—

1. The evacuation of Manchuria by both armies shall be complete within 18 months from the signing of the treaty, beginning with the retirement of the troops of the first line. At the expiration of 18 months the two parties will only be able to leave as railway guards 15 soldiers to every kilometre of the line.

2. The boundary which limits the parts owned respectively by Russia and Japan in Sakhalin shall be definitely marked off on the spot by a special boundary commission.

From Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a long leap must now be made to Manchuria, where the opposing armies had by this time learnt that peace had been arrived at, and that an immediate armistice was to be expected. On September 9th General Fukushima left Kai-yuan to meet General Oranousky, of General Liniévitch's staff, in order to arrange the details of an armistice. On September 13th an armistice to take effect on the 16th was agreed to.

On October 14th the Emperor of Russia and the Emperor of Japan appended their signatures to duplicate copies of the Treaty of Peace, thus officially terminating the Russo-Japanese War.



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SOME OF THE TRAVELLING TANKS FOR BOILING WATER WHICH HAVE DONE SO MUCH TO PRESERVE THE HEALTH OF THE JAPANESE TROOPS DURING THEIR CAMPAIGN.



Photo: Copyright, 1905, by H. C. White Co., London.

JAPAN'S "SILENT FIGHTERS" UNDER TRAINING.

CHAPTER CII.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS—A MANY-SIDED WAR—ITS REGULARITY—SUCCESSIVE PHASES —SOME ADDITIONAL LESSONS—LEADERSHIP—COST AND CASUALTIES.

IN entering upon this final chapter it is expedient to remark that it is not intended in any way to serve as a complete, or even moderately comprehensive, review of the main happenings and lessons of the war. What has gone before has rendered any such detailed recapitulation largely superfluous. Each major operation has already been fully treated both from its own individual standpoint and in relation to previous and subsequent proceedings. To each phase of the war its particular lessons have been, as far as possible, assigned. In this connection, then, and having regard to the popular character of this work, not much remains beyond a few additions, and some supplementary observations of a general character intended rather to inspire reflection than "to point a moral" or "adorn a tale."

Let us commence with one of these general observations. To the writer, after a fairly long and varied course of historical studies, the supreme attractiveness of this great struggle will always lie in its unparalleled many-sidedness. It is an attribute altogether outside what might be called the surprises and peculiarities of the war, to most of which the attention of the reader has already at one time or another been drawn. Nor can any intelligent person fail to find interest and instruction by investigating for himself the proposition whether any war of ancient or modern times has ever made history in so many different ways, has ever touched humanity on so

many different spots, as this twenty-month struggle for mastery in the Far East.

Apart from the mere fighting aspects of the Russo-Japanese War; apart from the engrossing circumstance that it is of surpassing naval as well as military interest; apart from the tales of heroism, of pathos and of tragedy with which its record abounds; apart from that important "lesson of maintenance" with which the writer has already dealt in some detail—apart from all these, some of them very remarkable, points, the war secures an easy pre-eminence over all preceding wars by reason of the amazing wealth of domestic and international side-issues associated with it. A war which was repeatedly within an ace of involving half the civilised world in a general conflagration; a war which simultaneously encouraged revolution and hopes of political reform; which was the queerest conceivable mixture of pure patriotism on the one side and cynical disregard of honour and principle on the other; which broke out between two Empires, and was ended largely by the intervention



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JAPANESE TROOPS ENTERING MUKDEN AFTER THE GREAT BATTLE OUTSIDE THE CITY.

of the President of a Republic—was there ever such a variegated war before, and does there seem much historical likelihood that the present generation will see another conflict of such absorbing multiple interest?

Yet, with all these complicated claims to the attention of naval and military students, of politicians, and of sociologists—to say nothing of humanitarians and doctors of law and medicine—the Russo-Japanese War is, from the historian's point of view, as evidenced by the scheme of this work, a wonderfully ship-shape and, so to speak, satisfying performance. It falls naturally, as we have seen, into well-defined phases; its course flows smoothly, and, if at times there are what seem at first sight to be rather violent interruptions and unaccountable diversions, it is soon seen that these do not anywhere modify the character of the record as a whole, or lead to any upsetting and incongruous conclusions. In its actual termination, alone, the war is a little abrupt; but the curtain falls in many a good piece on a situation in which something is left to the imagination, and in which all the various issues raised in the course of the play are not necessarily rounded off into one comprehensive *dénouement*.

Talking of phases, it is convenient here to recapitulate briefly those into which the present record has been divided. The division is, to some extent, an arbitrary one, and has been made with reference to a particular conception of the war which does not necessarily coincide with the conceptions of others, and it is certainly not put forward as being the only possible and correct chronological partition of which the story is capable. It has, however, the merit of being quite simple and logical. Thus the First Phase, according to the writer, lasted from February 8th, 1904, to about the end of the third week in May. By that date the First Army of Japan under General Kuroki had advanced to Feng-hwang-Cheng, the Second Army had landed in the Liao-tung Peninsula, and the Third Army at Takushan. To this phase belong the torpedo attacks at Port Arthur, the earlier blocking and other naval operations, and the Battle of the Yalu.

The Second Phase brings us to the end of July, 1904, and in this period are included the storming of Nan-shan, the battles of Telissu and Ta-shi-chao, and the capture of the Mo-tien-ling and other passes by the First and Third Armies. The Japanese commence their siege operations at Port Arthur, the Vladivostok squadron is much in evidence, and grave complications ensue as the result of the performances of the auxiliary cruisers *Peterburg* and *Smolensk*. These two first phases constituted the first 576 pages of this history.

The Third Phase of the war is from the beginning of August, 1904, to the beginning of February, 1905. Here we see the first three armies of Japan beginning to work in concert, with the result that Liao-yang is captured, and the Russians are badly beaten, first at the Battle of the Sha-ho, and later at Hei-kou-tai. Port Arthur falls, the Russian Fleet in the harbour is, practically speaking, destroyed, and the Baltic Fleet leaves Europe, the North Sea Outrage occurring *en route*.

From some standpoints, the last six or seven months of the war which have been dealt with in this last volume of our history may be said to constitute two or even more phases. But there is no essential need to insist upon any interme-

diate division, and, roughly speaking, the Battles of Mukden and the Sea of Japan, and the events leading up to the conclusion of peace, may be said to belong all to the Fourth or last Phase, in which a smashing defeat is sustained by Russia on land, her naval power in the Far East is utterly destroyed, and an advance to Harbin and the siege of Vladivostok are clearly foreshadowed. It will surely be admitted that none of the great wars of history falls more easily into compact and definite phases than does that between Russia and Japan under the arrangement outlined above.

The naval and military lessons of the war have for the most part been so fully discussed in connection with the various engagements, and at the close of the several phases, that little need be said here in this connection. It is instructive, however, to remark generally that in the great majority of instances those lessons had the distinctive merit of being conclusive, and, obviously for that reason, are likely to have a lasting effect upon the naval and military practice of other nations. It cannot be said that the net results of the professional deductions from what happened during the twenty months of the war are particularly striking in the matter of novelty, but at least they are not likely to be misleading, as by some competent critics was thought to be the case with the "lessons" learnt in South Africa. The geographical and climatic conditions were in some respects peculiar; but, on the other hand, the fighting was commonly—at any rate, as regards the land operations—on the same enormous scale as that on which any future great war in Europe would probably have to be conducted. There was no question of immense disparity of numbers or of any marked inequality as regards the fighting capacity of the individual soldiers engaged. Big armies met big armies, and the best side won by virtue, not so much of numbers, or marksmanship, or superior endurance and pugnacity, as because it had for years looked forward to the struggle, and anticipated every sort of difficulty connected with it. Practically speaking, the Russians had to shape their tactics and much of their strategy as they went along; while the Japanese had everything cut and dried, were prepared for every emergency, and, when they had accomplished one stage, knew exactly what to do next. Against such perfect readiness, combined with immense numbers and magnificent quality, it is, the writer repeats, altogether questionable whether any other Power would have made a much better stand than Russia did, unless it had been able at an early stage to secure the command of the sea.

Of course, as regards the naval fighting, there was no question of equal terms. Numerically, the Russians were able at times to show on paper a positive superiority, but in every factor that goes to make up "battleworthiness" they were so hopelessly outclassed that much of the educational interest of the war from the naval standpoint is, as we have seen, extremely thin. Inferior ships, ill-assorted squadrons, incompetent officers, unwilling and unskilful sailors, and, finally, wretched gunnery—with such drawbacks it may be doubted whether even the union of the Port Arthur and Baltic Fleets could have satisfactorily redressed the immense balance in favour of Japan. But this is a speculation which, assuredly, need not be carried further.

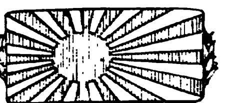
Reverting to the military lessons, nothing in the closing stage of the war occurred to modify the writer's early

conviction that perhaps the most genuinely instructive feature of the fighting was the success attained by the Japanese system of real night attacks—that is to say, attacks delivered during the actual hours of darkness, and not merely attacks delivered at dawn as the result of a night march. The British Army, it is pleasant to be able to add, was quick to profit by the Japanese example, and the war had not concluded when Lieut.-General Sir Ian Hamilton, who had returned from service as one of our military attachés with the Japanese Army in order to take up our Southern Command, commenced exercising his officers and men in this, practically speaking, new branch of warfare on Salisbury Plain.

For the rest, the writer has attempted to deal pretty exhaustively with the cavalry, infantry, and artillery lessons of the war, with due regard to the limitations of a popular history. But, as regards the first-named, a few words may here be added by the light of a remarkable exposition of the cavalry work on both sides, and more especially on that of Japan, which appeared from the pen of the special correspondent of the *Times* during August and September, 1905. From one of three articles, all of great interest and value, we learn some useful details concerning the Japanese cavalry soldier and his mount, which, as has been explained, is primarily of doubtful quality. Yet, notwithstanding some methods of "horsemastership" which are quite opposed to our ideas, the Japanese horses came very well out of the war, keeping in wonderful condition, and showing a very low rate of mortality. After fifteen months in the field the Japanese cavalry only required 50 per cent. of remounts, "a result in extraordinary contrast to our South African campaign, in which annual remounts of 250 per cent. were required for cavalry, and 400 per cent. for mounted infantry and irregulars."

The Japanese cavalry officer is said to be, as a rule, a good horseman, and the trooper, though not a stylish rider, is a tight sticker. As weapons, the Japanese cavalry carried during the war swords, rifles, and bayonets, the latter slung on the back, a method found very fatiguing, and likely to be supplanted by the use of the long bucket commonly employed in European armies. "Musketry training has not been deemed of great importance, practice-firing being limited to the expenditure of some 40 rounds per annum in time of peace. This is in line with French and German methods, and in sharp contrast to the 300 rounds supplied to our cavalry, and 400 to the American cavalry. The Japanese cavalry carry no lances.

"The squadron system of training obtains with the Japanese, the captain in command being entirely responsible for the efficiency of men and horses. This delegation of responsibility is a marked feature of the Japanese military system, and to it, in a great degree, is attributable the capacity and self-reliance of the officers who have led the troops on so many victorious fields. On service the squadron occupies separate quarters. The actual training is carried out in orthodox cavalry fashion, the aim being to evolve a supple body with power to manœuvre for the delivery of attack, mounted or dismounted, to the utmost advantage. Individual training pays special attention to independent reconnaissance, swordsmanship, and knowledge of the mount. The cavalry spirit is highly developed, the charge being regarded as the culminating manœuvre."



COMING BACK ON THEIR COMRADES' SHOULDERS. DEAD AND WOUNDED JAPANESE BORNE INTO CAMP UNDER THE RED CROSS FLAG AFTER AN ATTACK ON PORT ARTHUR.

Concerning the Russian cavalry, a good many details have been given in the course of this work, and attention has been duly drawn to the utter failure more especially of the mounted Cossack to fulfil the expectations formed concerning him. This last exposure is strongly confirmed by the *Times* correspondent, who points out that time after time the Russian cavalry omitted to make use of what he aptly calls "glaring opportunities" to harass the Japanese communications. He attributes this largely to the fact that the Russian cavalry has been taught to fight dismounted, and that, accordingly, the Russians had deliberately "divested themselves of the one arm which, many keen observers believe, might have availed to turn the tide in their favour. The Battle of Mukden was a great defeat, though not an overwhelming disaster. At one period the result absolutely hung in the balance, and it is no wild statement to say that, if the Russian cavalry had been armed and trained in orthodox cavalry fashion, and handled in a manner consistent with cavalry tradition, Mukden would have proved a drawn battle."

Whether the Russians took the failure of their cavalry to heart seems a little doubtful in view of the consistent eulogy of Mishtchenko's rather poor performances. But there is no question that the Japanese saw clearly that they were handicapped by the comparatively small number of cavalry they were enabled to put into the field at critical stages of the fighting. A concluding extract from the authority quoted above puts the matter in a nutshell:—"The Japanese, inhabiting a hilly country practically devoid of wide plains, and having comparatively little use and small liking for horses, have restricted the cavalry arm in their military organisation to the smallest possible dimensions. The war has brought home to them the value of cavalry, and one of the very first reforms in their army will be the augmentation of the mounted branch of service. To this end, and for the rehorsing of their artillery, they have recently imported a large number of Australian horses, ready, upon acclimatisation, to be incorporated in the army now in the field, should the war continue. The Japanese are an eminently practical people. From the weakness in their own cavalry, and from the consciousness that properly-handled Russian cavalry could have played havoc with their dispositions in action and in inaction, they have learnt the cavalry lesson, and they mean to profit by it. It is impossible to observe events in the war, and to discuss the question with Japanese officers and officers of many foreign armies, without being forced to the conclusion that the Japanese are sound in their interpretation of the cavalry lesson—that genuine cavalry, and plenty of it, is essential to an army."

In the volume of which a considerable section was devoted to the siege operations at Port Arthur, some incidental mention was made of the persistent, heroic, and skilful manner in which the Japanese Sappers carried out their arduous duties. It is pleasant to be able to enrich this final chapter of our history with an extract highly illustrative of the devotion and capacity of a branch of military service which often receives quite inadequate recognition. It may be remembered that on October 27th-28th, 1904, there was terrible fighting in front of the Chi-huan-shan, or Cockscomb Hill Fort (see Chapter LXX.), resulting in the occupation by the Japanese

of several important footholds. The following account, a translation of which appeared in the *Times*, describes the capture of the North Cockscomb Hill Fort, and was written by a Japanese engineer officer. He relates first the discovery, shortly after noon on October 27th, by a working party, of one of the enemy's countermining tunnels from which it was urgently necessary to remove, if possible, the explosives which the Russians had set for the destruction of the Japanese. What follows must be quoted *verbatim*, for omissions or a paraphrase would spoil the effect:—

"This work was entrusted to a party of six men, volunteers from the Imperial Engineer Battalion on the spot—Sergeant Katsugi Mitani, Corporal Tamejiro Takahashi, First Class Privates Tomoichi Hori, Kinzo Furusawa, Toshiro Kawabata, and Second Class Private Asataro Matsushita. They understood the desperate nature of the enterprise full well, and, wishing to die decently, as the gentlemen soldiers of Japan should, they dressed in their best and went—to their certain death. At 1.30 exactly the sound of a violent explosion rent the air, and the comrades anxiously waiting at the mouth of the gallery were assailed by pebbles, shingles, and *débris*. Mitani, Takahashi, and Furusawa were pulled out of the crater by means of the ropes which were tied to their ankles for this purpose, all severely wounded, while the rest sacrificed their lives at the altar of patriotism and duty.



COUNT SCHUVALOFF, PREFECT OF MOSCOW, ASSASSINATED ON JULY 11TH, 1905.

"The quantity of the dynamite used was unnecessarily large, and the force of the explosion so great that it utterly demolished our mine gallery. But at the same time it split the ground to such an extent that the outer surface of the wall became detached from the natural soil, enabling us to determine the nature of it. The wall appeared to be about three mètres thick, of concrete, tarred over on the outside, and covered with tarpaulin sheets. This method of construction is proof against almost any calibre of mobile siege guns. We at once organised a party for blowing up the exposed wall. Sergeant Iida, with two first class privates of engineers, crawled up over the edge of the crater into the ditch for purposes of reconnaissance, returning safely with a satisfactory report. Then Sergeant Okura was sent with gun-cotton in sandbags along with Corporals Horikawa, Fukunaga, and Private Muzuki. They daringly advanced right up to the foot of the wall, crawling on their stomachs very slowly, and lying down at every few paces, feigning death. They placed and fired the gun-cotton; the explosion tore the wall off the ground, leaving a gap of 4cm. between. The Russians took not

the slightest notice of it; perhaps they imagined that to be an impact of a Japanese shell. We again inserted a large quantity of gun-cotton under the wall and exploded it. This made a hole, but not sufficiently large for our assaulting party to enter.

"So the persistent engineers determined upon the third attempt. They shot down several of the Russians who looked wonderingly out of the rent. The third attempt was entirely successful; this time the explosion of the gun-cotton tore a hole in the solid masonry of concrete about 1m. in height and 1½m. wide. Through this 12 grenades were thrown in, and under the cover of the smoke and confusion a party of infantry numbering not more than half a company filed in and occupied the part of the underground chamber; the other part still remained in the possession of the enemy. The Japanese and Russian combatants were separated only by the thin khaki-coloured wall of sandbags between. We slowly and steadily advanced, inch by inch, each soldier pushing in front of him a bag of sand or a paraffin tin filled with shingle. The sound of bullets striking these paraffin tins was weird in the extreme. The Russians sought protection under the cover of steel-plate partitions, striving stubbornly and yet in vain to stem the tide of the Japanese advance. The steel plates we exploded; the sandbags we simply pushed aside. Thus, within twenty-four hours after the breach the whole of North Cockscomb Hill Fort was firmly and effectively occupied by the Japanese."

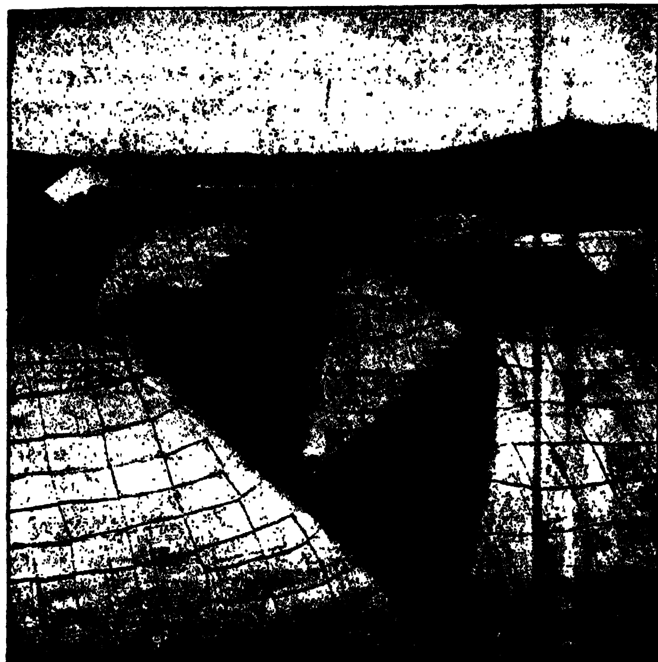


Photo: Copyright, H. C. White Co., London.

DALNY AS VIEWED FROM THE TOP OF ONE OF THE GREAT STORE HEAPS ERECTED OUTSIDE THE TOWN.

Frequent allusion has been made in the course of the preceding narrative to the matters of transport and supply. As a rule it has been necessary to give particular credit to the Japanese for the excellence of their arrangements in this respect, but it must never be forgotten that the maintenance of the Siberian Railway in working order throughout the whole period of the war was a feat of which the Japanese record has no counterpart, and which must of necessity be regarded as a very fine and also very significant performance. That the Siberian Railway would be cut at an early stage of the war was at the outset a very frequent prediction. That it would break down or would, at any rate,

prove hopelessly incapable of supplying the wants of a large army in the field, to say nothing of transporting constant reinforcements, was, later, regarded almost as a foregone conclusion. Yet, thanks to the vigilance of the railway guards, many attempts at line-wrecking were frustrated, and the energy and ability of Prince Khilkoff enabled Russia, even after such heavy disasters as the Battles of Liao-yang and Mukden, to keep up a steady stream of reinforcements and maintain the supply system at the front in a very fair state of efficiency according to Russian ideas. Whether the commanders of other armies would have demanded so much as Kuropatkin did from troops which at times must have endured very serious privations is another matter. The fact remains that the Russian defeats were, at any rate, not due to physical incapacity arising from starvation, and, considering that communication with the primary base of supply consisted of a single line of rail only, there will be not a few military students inclined to regard Prince Khilkoff as the real Russian hero of the war.

The Russians, too, deserve credit for their progressive performance in at least one particular, as regards extra-railway transport. We have already seen how Kuropatkin toured along the Russian front in a high-speed motor car. It may here be added that, at the commencement of 1905, the Russian Government placed an extensive order for automobiles with a large firm in Hanover, and further commissioned the latter to organise and train an automobile corps consisting of soldiers selected from Russian railway regiments. The machines were duly built and subjected to extremely severe tests, and a considerable number of drivers were duly instructed and despatched with the cars to the front.



Photo: Copyright, 1905, by H. C. White Co., London.

JAPANESE TEMPORARY HOSPITAL IN A TEMPLE.

They could not, however, have arrived until the early summer, by which time, as has been seen, the operations were becoming rather languid. The lessons gained in this direction, therefore, are not likely to be very conclusive. At the same time, the Russian Army may certainly claim the credit of being the first to make practical use in warfare of the modern motor car as distinct from the "steam sappers," or heavy traction engines, which we ourselves used in South Africa with a very fair measure of success.

It is now time to break away from these addenda to the main story of the

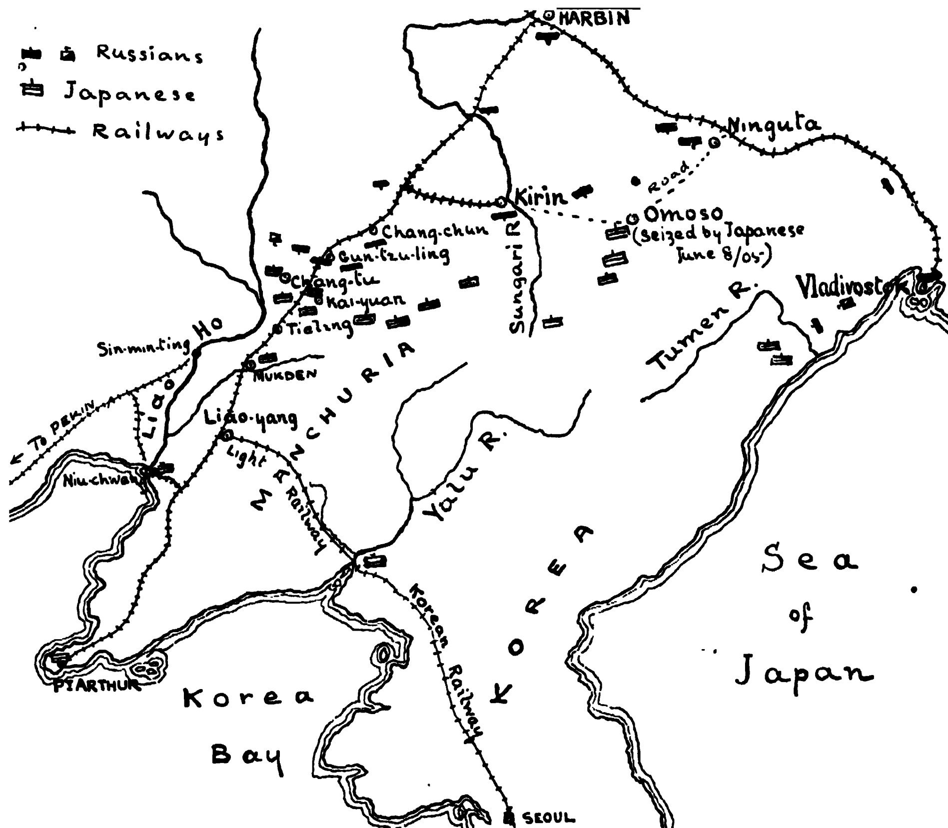
war, and devote a short space to a question which is both superior and subordinate to those matters of preparedness, *personnel*, and detail with which we have just been cursorily dealing. The subject of the generalship displayed in the Russo-Japanese War is, and probably always will be, a rather vexed one. It is complicated by considerations with which we in England are not really familiar, and it is by no means certain that, as to these, the world has been so much enlightened as it thinks by the lessons and examples of this mighty conflict.

That the Japanese did wonderful things, and afforded a magnificent spectacle of what can be done by perfect readiness and co-ordination of naval and military movements, goes without saying. But it would have been far more instructive if they had not been quite so uniformly, so almost monotonously successful. It may be that they would have triumphed even more gloriously if they had met with greater opposition, or if the fight had been really to a finish. But the careful observer cannot help at times wondering whether even the Japanese system would have stood the strain of a few really serious reverses, brought about by the enemy's exhibition of marked superiority in one or two telling directions. It is a known fact that, taken all round, the Russian field guns were much better than those which the Japanese had, and that their cavalry was a good deal more numerous. They lost their advantage in the one case by bad gunnery, and in the other by using their cavalry as mounted infantry. Straighter Russian powder and some genuine Russian cavalry work on the Japanese flanks and lines of communication might have enabled us to see the Japanese in conditions much more favourable to accurate judgment than any in which the actual progress of the war revealed them. We know that the greatest general is he who makes the fewest mistakes, but it is much easier, of course, not to make mistakes when an enemy generally does just what he is expected to do, and allows himself to be beaten time after time without developing any new tactics, or even adopting any new method of retirement.

While, then, the respectful admiration of the world is due to Japan for the way in which she organised victory, and due to her commanders for the way in which they interpreted the instructions of the General Staff at Tokio, the meed of supreme merit must be withheld from a country and from leadership which had so little to contend with in the way of reverses and obstacles to the fulfilment of carefully pre-arranged plans.

It has been said above that probably no existing Army would have made a much better stand against Oyama's hosts than did the Russian, and to this contention the writer adheres. But, of course, he does not mean to say that there are not at least four Powers which, if they took the field against Japan with the experience of the war to help them, would not make a very much better showing than Russia. This brings us to the heart of the matter, namely, that Japan's success against her big, but torpid and unready, adversary must not be regarded as conclusive proof that her methods in general, and her leadership in particular, were absolutely perfect. She herself would probably be the last to urge any such foolish proposition, and the first to acknowledge that the ordeal through which she and her officers and men have passed was not such as to place her warlike infallibility beyond all question.

An able and brilliant critic has attributed much of Japan's success to the fact that she had laid to heart the best German teaching, and that, more particularly, she had put into practice the admonitions of that great master of the art of war, Clausewitz. The proposition is an extremely interesting one and, as far as it goes, incontestable. The fundamental principle of attack which Clausewitz advocated, namely, that a considerable objective should be pursued with the utmost energy and resolution, could not well have been more closely followed than it was by the Japanese. Admirably, too, did they conform to his method of giving each divisional and army commander the principal direction of his march, and leaving it to him to "get there," whatever the intervening obstacles. But it may be questioned whether the result of the big engagements in the Russo-Japanese War was not due as much to the Russian failure to carry out the ideas of Clausewitz and other great teachers, as to the facility and thoroughness with which the Japanese had assimilated those sound doctrines. Had the Russians been more active when on the defensive, or had they, like the Boers,



SKETCH MAP TO SHOW GENERAL POSITIONS OF THE RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE FORCES AT THE END OF THE WAR.

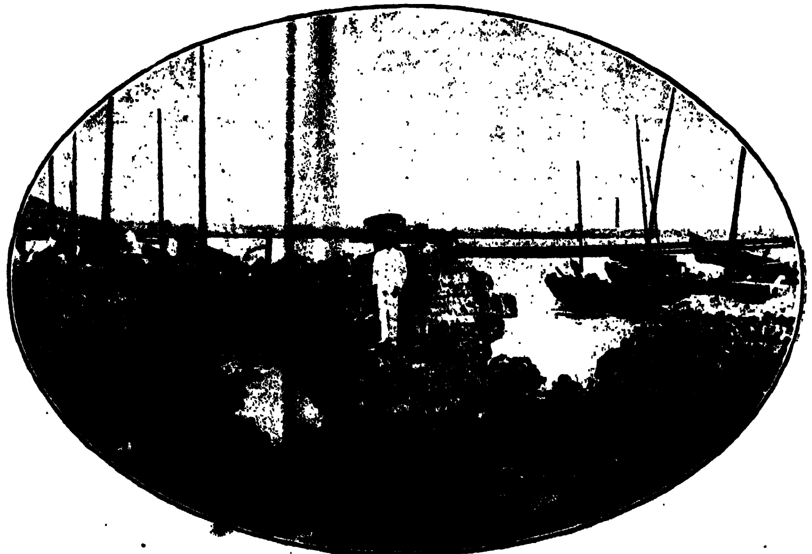


Photo: J. F. J. Archibald.
A "GOOD" MANCHURIAN ROAD IN SUMMER.

to prove that he was not so much to blame as might have been supposed. There is no question that at the outset he was under the old illusion as to the invincible power of Russia and the doubtful staying quality of the Japanese. But even before the Battle of Liao-yang he had realised to some extent the greatness of the task before him, and had issued the first of a series of "letters to officers above the rank of company commander" with a view to inculcating a better knowledge of Japanese methods and the best way of dealing with them. Two of these letters were picked up after the Battle of Mukden, and interesting extracts were given from them by the *Times* correspondent with the First Japanese Army. They contain

developed rather original and extremely troublesome modes of fighting, it is conceivable that the Japanese would not have found it so easy to have conducted their land operation *à la Clausewitz*, and it is possible that their measures to cope with unexpected situations would have been more interesting—they would certainly have been instructive — than their procession of victories.

At first sight it seems that Kuropatkin must be blamed for not having rendered Japan's task on land a far harder one. But there is curious and convincing evidence



RESULT OF A MINE EXPLODED BY THE RUSSIANS BEFORE EVACUATING DALNY, AFTER THE BATTLE OF NAN-SHAN.

some futilities and some misapprehensions, but they are at worst a creditable attempt on the part of a disillusioned commander to render his subordinates fitter to meet a greatly superior adversary. The attempt was in vain. Simple as was the instruction conveyed—" these letters say nothing which ought not to be by training second nature to those to whom they are addressed "—it was not properly, or, at any rate, sufficiently quickly digested, and time after time Kuropatkin's underlings failed him when a better knowledge of the rudiments of their profession would have enabled them to give him real assistance.

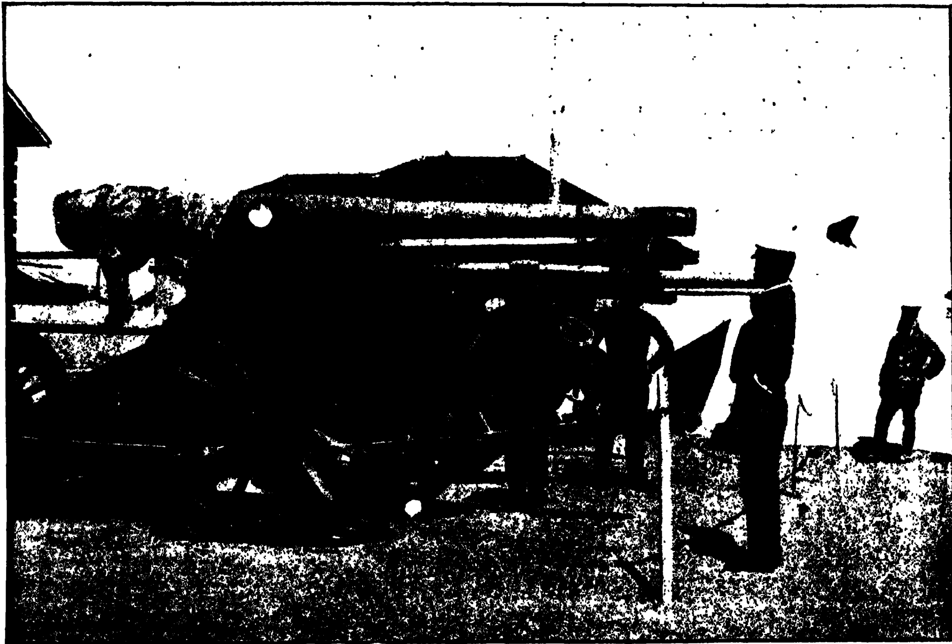


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CAPTURED RUSSIAN GUNS OF POSITION AT TIE-LING.

Of the performances of Kuropatkin and Oyama, of their respective staffs, and of the various other prominent generals on both sides, sufficient has been said in the course of the narrative to render any separate apportionment of credit or blame superfluous here. Again, as regards the chief actors personally, and more especially as regards the Japanese Commander-in-Chief, it is necessary to repeat the caution which was included among the lessons taught by the Battle of Mukden. When warfare reaches the point which it reached at least once in the course of the Russo-Japanese conflict it becomes a serious question whether it is possible to make any sort of fair estimate of the work by any commander having under him more than at most 150,000, or, in extreme instances, say, a quarter of a million men. In the case of Japan it is sufficiently clear that Marshal Oyama can only nominally be held accountable for much that must have been done under the direct inspiration of the General Staff at Tokio.

When, however, we come to the leaders of the numbered armies the position is altered to some extent. In any case there is no harm in the indication of a personal preference which may or may not be supported by the judgment of posterity, when the latter comes to be fortified by much additional information, and clarified by the disappearance of some contemporary misconceptions. Of all the army commanders on both sides, the figure which will appeal most strongly, the writer thinks—at any rate, to professional students—is that of General Kuroki, the leader of the First Army of Japan. He has not to his credit quite so many separate victories as General Oku, nor is he invested with the peculiar glory of having, like General Nogi, captured an "impregnable" fortress. But there is something strangely, pre-eminently impressive in the splendid record which commences so brilliantly with the Battle of the Yalu, and ends with such a sterling performance in the operations that constituted and succeeded the Battle of Mukden. Wherever there was work for Kuroki to do he did it with a high-spirited zeal and thoroughness which of themselves seemed to cause obstacles to shrivel up to half their proper dimensions. Always ready for work, he never lost an hour in waiting to begin, and repeatedly we see Kuroki's men just a little ahead of their appointed task, and either giving a hand to armies on the left or right, or peering eagerly into the fog of war in front of them in the hope of finding justification or opportunity for a fresh forward movement. It is only when the commander is of very remarkable calibre that an army can be so consistently to the front, and so consistently successful, as was the First Army of Japan for the twelve most strenuous fighting months of the war, and it will not be easy to call in question the claim which the writer makes for Kuroki that, at least, as a subordinate leader, he stands in the very highest rank of fighting generals.

It now remains to close this chapter with a few words as to the aggregate cost of the war and the total casualties. As regards the former, any attempt to produce a detailed estimate would be tedious, and very possibly misleading. But the calculation which puts the bulked cost of the war at about four hundred and fifty millions sterling, of which £200,000,000 represented the loss to Japan, may be accepted as in all likelihood substantially correct. Of this sum it is reckoned that Japan spent £120,000,000 in the maintenance of her field armies alone, Russia's expenditure being about the same, notwithstanding the smaller number of troops at the front. Russia's expenditure includes the value of her lost ships, but the latter has not been set against the disbursements and losses of Japan.

As regards casualties, those who care to study such matters in detail are referred to the *Times* of August 5th, 1905, in which an important series of calculations is made by the highly qualified Tokio correspondent of the leading journal with the assistance of all the available official *data*. Having regard to the doubtful accuracy of some of the Russian returns, and to the necessity of speculating rather freely with regard to the total Japanese casualties in connection with the Siege of Port Arthur, only the main figures of this statement are reproduced here. These are to the effect that, from the beginning to the end of the war, 166,756 Japanese of all ranks were killed, wounded, or died of their

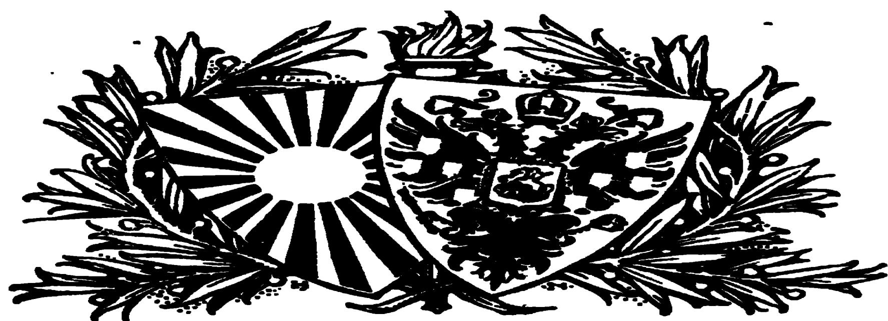
wounds, while the total Russian casualties from death or wounds were 320,779. The loss in prisoners was, in the case of Japan, 646; in that of Russia, 67,701.

Our record is now finished. No preface to the first edition of this work being possible, the writer asks to be permitted here to express a general acknowledgment of the assistance he has derived from the accounts furnished by many able newspaper correspondents, more especially those representing the *Times*, of the episodes and circumstances of this Titanic contest. He has endeavoured not to borrow without stating the source of the loan, but some omissions to quote authorities may have occurred, and for these apologies are tendered. In a book like this some errors, too, have been absolutely unavoidable. It is believed that they are as few and as trivial as could be expected, and every effort will be made to correct or eliminate them in future editions.



Photo: Urban, Ltd. + *Russian Sentry.*

THE ONLY TUNNEL ON THE MANCHURIAN RAILWAY.



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